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THE INDEPENDENT

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Newspaper of the Year for photographs

Parades row setback for Ulster peace

By David McKittrick
and Colin Brown

ATTEMPTS to impose order and discipline on the approaching Orange marching season received an ominous setback yesterday with the resignation of two loyalist members of the newly appointed Parades Commission.

The commission was set up to prevent a repeat of last year's marching season, when disturbances included 1,500 petrol-bombing incidents, 800 attacks on the security forces and extensive damage to both property and community relations.

The resignations came after the commission accepted a request from Tony Blair not to announce which marches it intended to ban this year.

The commission's authority and credibility as an independent body, which have already been called into question by both loyalist and republican elements, have received significant blows from the resignations, said Mr Blair's intervention. Only four members and a chairman remain.

Those who stepped down were two working-class loyalists, Glen Barr, a prominent activist from Londonderry, and Johnny Cheevers, from Belfast. The reasons they gave for resigning were vague. Mr Barr, blaming media pressure while Mr Cheevers said "the environment is not yet right for me to make the necessary contribution

to the commission's work". The widespread belief is that the commission was about to announce a ban on a number of parades, including the most contentious of all, the march along Garvaghy Road from Drumcree at Portadown, Co Armagh in early July.

Mr Blair wrote to commission chairman Alistair Graham saying: "I have come to the view that it would be preferable to avoid overloading the political system by putting your preliminary view in the public domain now. My broader concern is simply to ensure that the broader political situation at an already volatile time is kept fully in mind."

The assumption is that the Prime Minister feared that a Drumcree ban would inflame Protestant opinion. The referendum on the Good Friday agreement is scheduled for 22 May, followed by elections to a Belfast assembly on 25 June.

Opinion among northern Catholics is clearly strongly in favour of the accord but Protestants are much less committed. A recent opinion poll found that 42 per cent of Protestants were undecided on how they would vote.

Given these political realities, Mr Blair may well have concluded that a strong Yes vote is far more important than the outcome of a particular marching controversy.

In the wake of these events the politics of denunciation

were in full flow from yesterday from both sides, with the air full of allegations of chicanery. An additional element in Unionist criticism was the announcement that the four members of the Balcombe Street Gang, one of the IRA's most notorious units from the 1970s, are being transferred from jail in Britain to an Irish prison.

Both David Trimble and Downing Street denied that the Ulster Unionist Party leader had made representations to the Prime Minister to postpone the commission's announcement. Mr Trimble said he had however spoken to Mr Graham and had been "really quite angry" that he had not consulted him about the Drumcree issue. He added that banning the parade would be "lunatic, absolute folly."

Brendan Mac Conaith, spokesman for nationalist Garvaghy Road residents, said Mr Blair's intention was an indication that the Government was giving in to pressure from the orangemen.

A "memorial forest" could be planted in Ulster as a mark of respect to the more than 3,000 people who have been killed during three decades of the Troubles. This is one of the ideas which will be proposed in a report on memorials to the victims of violence in Ulster by Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, a former senior civil servant at the Northern Ireland Office.

Dolly had a little lamb...



HER MOTHER may be the most famous sheep in the world, but Bonnie the lamb is already getting used to cameras, writes Charles Arthur.

Born at 4am on 13 April, she is the daughter, not a clone, of Dolly the cloned sheep. "Despite Dolly's unusual origins, the birth of her lamb confirms she is able to breed normally and produce healthy offspring," said Graham

Bulfield of the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh, where Dolly was cloned. Though born in July 1996, Dolly's existence was not announced until January 1997 - triggering an international debate on the ethics of cloning, which can create genetically identical animals from an adult cell nucleus implanted into a vacant egg cell.

The birth of a healthy lamb counters

fears that Dolly might be prone to age-related disorders, having been cloned from an adult. It is also important to the commercialisation of the nuclear transfer technique that produced Dolly: "When nuclear transfer is used ... a few transgenic founder cattle, sheep or pigs will be expanded into larger flocks or herds by conventional breeding, not by cloning," said Dr Bulfield.

UK has highest rate of asthma in world

By Jeremy Laurence
Health Editor

BRITAIN has the highest rate of childhood asthma in the world according to the first global study of the disease.

Up to one in three children in Britain suffer from wheezing, a rate 20 times higher than in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Far East. Only Australia, New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland come close.

The findings from the International Study of Asthma and Allergies in Childhood, covering 460,000 children aged 13-14 in 56 countries, effectively disprove the theory that pollution is a cause of asthma. Regions with the worst pollution such as China and Eastern Europe had among the lowest rates while New Zealand, where the air is renowned for its purity, had among the highest.

However, high levels of air pollution are known to trigger attacks in people who already have asthma. The cause of asthma remains a mystery and the researchers hope that by mapping its incidence across the world clues may emerge.

Researchers in 155 centres in the 56 countries questioned the children about whether they had experienced symptoms of asthma, rhinoconjunctivitis (inflammation of the nasal passages and eyes) and eczema, the skin disorder.

The results, published in *The Lancet*, show that although the three conditions are similar allergic disorders, their global distribution is different, suggesting they have different causes. All three were lowest in Eastern Europe and Asia and highest in the UK, Ireland, USA, Australia, New Zealand and Canada - countries with a common genetic inheritance.

In a commentary on the findings, Dr Sarah Lewis of the University of Nottingham said this was consistent with "a greater genetic predisposition to atopy [the tendency to allergic reactions] in these populations".

But she added that genetics alone was unlikely to account for the huge international differences or for the recent rapid increase in asthma in countries with the highest rates. Results from the UK showed an asthma rate of 20 to 37 per cent.

Asthma is very unlikely to be the result of a single cause. Other possible causes include declining family size - which has meant exposure to fewer infections in childhood necessary to build up the immune system; lifestyle changes like central heating and wall-to-wall carpets which provide the perfect home for house dust mites; maternal smoking; vaccinations and the use of antibiotics.



Labour Party caught out over expenses fiddle

By Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

THE Labour Party has been caught attempting to get MPs to claim Commons expenses for a party political service.

But *The Independent* was told last night that the Commons authorities would rule the expenses fiddle out of order, and any MPs' claims would be rejected.

A letter received by all 417 Labour MPs at the start of this month from Tom Sawyer, the party's general secretary, offered a "24-hour media monitoring service" to top-line briefing of all the political news stories running in the broadcast media and daily newspapers. In just a few minutes you can appraise yourself of every issue in the media.

The MPs were told that the written brief would be sent out by fax every morning at 9.30. The bad news was that, "unfortunately, due to the limited nature of the party's resources,

MP charged over election costs

A LABOUR MP has been charged with submitting false election expenses.

Fiona Jones, MP for Newark, Nottinghamshire, is to appear at Nottingham Magistrates' court on 22 May, charged with an offence under the 1983 Representation of the People Act. The last recorded conviction of an MP for submitting false election expenses was in 1923. Page 8

we have to charge £250 plus VAT per annum to cover the faxing and administration costs of providing this service."

The good news was that Mr Sawyer was offering the taxpayer's wallet to foot the bill. "If you wish to order the media brief," he said, "then please complete a Form B and submit this to the [Commons] fees of-

fice (a copy is enclosed)." The fees office pays MPs' expenses, and the form contained a statutory declaration that the cash was to be spent on "services provided wholly, exclusively and necessarily in connection with my parliamentary duties".

The order form said that if an MP wanted the brief faxed to a different number, during recesses the cost would be £411.25.

The order form then concluded with a clear suggestion that the entire deal had been agreed by the Commons authorities, asking the MP to sign a statement saying: "I enclose a copy of my completed Form B (periodical payment) which has been accepted by the fees office."

In fact, the fees office had accepted no such agreement. A spokesman told *The Independent*: "This is a briefing service for Labour MPs, and they have been told they can claim this off their office costs allowance. No, they can't."

"Clearly, this is political; it



Tom Sawyer: 'A 24-hour media monitoring service'

is purely for Labour Party Members of Parliament."

Gillian Shephard, shadow Leader of the Commons, last night condemned the "fairly transparent try-on".

The Independent reported last year that new Labour MPs had been asked to "contribute" £5,000 out of their £47,568 of office costs allowance towards the salaries of their constituency party agents. Once exposed, the "demand with menaces" was dropped.

One senior Labour MP told *The Independent* last night: "This is yet another brazen attempt by the party to milk the system. They should have learned their lesson last year, and should stop this nonsense now."

Accused detective on full pay for 3 years

By Steve Boggan
Chief Reporter

A DETECTIVE accused of raping an informant under police protection, stealing £400,000 worth of heroin and attempting to pervert the course of justice has been at home on full pay for more than three years.

The officer, attached to the South East Regional Crime Squad, was suspended after being accused of the offences in late 1994, but no decision has yet been taken on whether he should be disciplined.

The Complaints Investigation Bureau at New Scotland Yard - which has examined complaints against more than 40 detectives from the squad in recent years - confirmed yesterday that the officer has been receiving a salary of about £30,000 while a decision on his future was made.

The Crown Prosecution Service has decided not to prose-

cute him, but a recommendation on whether he should face disciplinary action was sent to the Metropolitan Police by the Police Complaints Authority in February 1997. No action has been taken following that recommendation.

Detective Chief Inspector Jan Quinton, the CIB officer in charge of the case, said: "The matter is still ongoing and he is being paid during his suspension. I have no idea when a decision on his future will be made. This is not the time for me to discuss the reason for the delays [in the inquiry] because I would expect that when the matters are concluded that will be an issue high on the agenda. There are a variety of reasons why it has taken so long: some of those are under my control and some of them are not."

The complaints against the officer were made by a female informant under his protection. She made 34 allegations against him, most seriously that

he repeatedly raped and sexually assaulted her between July and August 1994 at two safe houses in Essex. Other allegations were that he "dishonestly appropriated 4 kilos of heroin from a total quantity of 40 kilos that were seized"; that in March 1994, he "unlawfully supplied the complainant with a firearm and a case of bullets"; and that he "unlawfully supplied the complainant with dangerous drugs", namely cannabis, LSD and ecstasy. Among other allegations, the woman claims the officer stole money from her, told her what to say in a witness statement in a bid to pervert the course of justice, tapped her phone, dishonestly handled £25,000 and failed to act on information about other crimes.

It is understood one of the difficulties facing CIB officers is the potential unreliability of the witness, a drug user. According to police sources, the officer vigorously denies her version of events.

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Leave us to grieve in peace - Sir Paul

By Andrew Buncombe

SIR PAUL MCCARTNEY yesterday appealed to be left in peace and for the remote US desert ranch where his wife died to remain private.

In a statement, Sir Paul said the Arizona property had been the family's one place where, over the past 20 years, they could live anonymously.

"Our family has received many beautiful messages of sympathy from ordinary people around the world," he said. "Reading their messages, we know that ordinary people

that the former Beatle's wife had died in Santa Barbara, California, where the couple were holidaying. But when the coroner's office said it had not received a death certificate there was speculation, fuelled largely by statements from coroner's officers, that her death may have been assisted.

It transpired on Wednesday that the 56-year-old had actually died at the family's ranch near Tucson, Arizona. The writer Carla Lane, a family friend, said yesterday it was the place she "loved above all places".

Mr Baker said: "Morally I have done nothing wrong and legally I have done nothing wrong. I am just trying to keep this family together."

To dispel rumours about the "assisted death" Mr Baker said Lady McCartney's specialist, Dr Larry Norton, would confirm her death had been natural.

Dr Norton, head of solid tumour oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Centre in New York, yesterday declined to comment but a statement issued by the hospital said: "Dr Norton... was Linda McCartney's primary medical oncologist. It is his medical opinion that she died of natural causes with metastatic breast cancer."

However, the hospital admitted that Dr Norton had not been present at her death or did not know how he had reached his opinion. It declined to say whether Dr Norton had been treating her in the weeks preceding her death.

It was also claimed yesterday that a death certificate had been signed by a cancer specialist from the University of Arizona. Unlike California, Arizona is a "closed record state" which means there is no requirement for the authorities to reveal documents such as birth and death certificates.

Despite this, investigators at the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department said they could not drop their inquiries into Lady McCartney's death until they had been independently confirmed of where she died.



Out of tune: Dr Martin Neary, organist for ten years at Westminster Abbey, has been dismissed from his post and ordered out of Abbey Cloisters

Photograph: Clive Bards

Pulling out the stops to keep Abbey on song

THE funeral of Diana, the Princess of Wales, was the high point in Dr Martin Neary's career, writes Clare Garner. As Organist and Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey he was responsible for the musical direction of the service, and his success in doing so - at such short notice - was acknowledged by the Queen, who afterwards awarded him a Lieutenant Royal Victorian Order.

No one could have predicted that six months later he would be out of a job, dismissed from the post he had held for the past ten years. Ironically, it falls to the Queen to decide whether he should be reinstated.

Dr Neary, 58, and his wife, Penny, 54, who was employed as the Abbey's concert secretary, were dismissed on Wednesday for gross misconduct. Their salaries were stopped immediately and they were ordered to move out of their home in the Abbey Cloisters, where they have lived for the past decade.

The couple are understood to be in an "extremely fragile" state, but are being sustained by the sheer volume of support from friends, colleagues and politicians. They have been swamped with letters from the par-

ents of choirboys; Conservative MPs John Gummer and Robert Key were yesterday expected to ask questions in the House on the subject.

"They've gone through hell in the last eight weeks" said Trevor Ford, whose two sons are in the Abbey choir.

"They are mystified as to how, when a new Dean arrives, they have somehow undergone some strange transformation into people who are not to be trusted."

The allegations against the Nearys concern their setting up of a company, Neary Music Limited, to handle monies from non-Abbey events.

The Dean, the Very Reverend Wesley Carr, has accused the Nearys of taking advantage of their position "to further their own financial gain."

IN THE NEWS MARTIN NEARY

Nothing according to Mr Ford could be further from the truth. "They have done more than they ever needed to for that place (the Abbey). The benefits to the Abbey, not just financial, have been enormous, culminating in the service for Diana."

Neary Music Limited, was, he said "purely an administrative vehicle", set up following an earlier arrangement in 1994 with Abbey staff and an auditor who have since left. Dr Carr was appointed Dean a year ago. He was

previous Dean of Bristol. During his time there, both the organist and the headmaster of the choir school were obliged to resign.

Dr Neary has an impeccable track record. Before coming to Westminster Abbey he was Master of the Choristers at Winchester Cathedral for 15 years.

The Bishop of Winchester at that time, the Right Reverend John Taylor, wrote a letter to the *Times* earlier this month which read "I can testify to his (Dr Neary's) absolute integrity, his loyalty to his team and the essentially spiritual motivation of his work."

Dr Neary is currently president of the Royal College of Organists, having been elected president for a sec-

ond time - the only person ever to have been afforded that privilege. As a boy, Dr Neary was in the choir of the Chapel Royal and sang at the Coronation. He has never lost touch with what it is like to be a choirboy, a quality which is greatly appreciated by parents and choirboys alike.

"He's extremely caring to the boys" said Mr Ford. "They work like mad in addition to their ordinary academic careers, so they need someone there who actually understands what boys are like. He leads them by example rather than by driving them."

"They are missing him enormously. They are extremely mystified by what's going on - he hasn't been allowed to speak to them."

Dr and Mrs Neary are going to appeal to the Queen and Abbey canons respectively. The process could take up to three months, during which time they will remain at their home in the Abbey Cloisters, but unable to speak to any staff at the Abbey.

"Presently they are out of context, surrounded by enemies, unemployed and unpaid," said Mr Ford. "They do not understand how, after acting in the best interests of the Abbey throughout, they can be treated in this way."

THE WOULD-BE RESCUERS
A number of prominent figures attempted to intervene to settle what the Nearys claim was simply a misunderstanding by the Dean.

MP John Gummer, who has known Dr Neary since they were students together at Cambridge, the Dean of Guildford and Lord

Wetherill all offered to arbitrate in the enquiry.

HAPPIER DAYS
Dr Neary married Penny in 1967. They have one son and two daughters. One daughter, Alice, who is in her 20s, is a well-known cellist and the other, Nicola, also in her 20s, is a doctor. Dr Neary's hobby is watching cricket.

DIANA'S MUSIC
Among the music at Diana's funeral was *I Vow To Thee My Country*, *The King Of Love My Shepherd Is*, and *Hallelujah, My Flights of Angels Sing Thee to Thy Rest*, *Elegy* by George Thalben-Ball, prelude on the hymn tune *Rhosynodre*, and choral prelude: *Ich ruf' zu dir, Her Jesu Christ*.

Jet-lag remedy can lead to convulsions in children

By Jeremy Lawrence
Health Editor

TWO SUPPLEMENTS sold over the counter in health-food shops have caused severe reactions in some people, researchers have found.

Melatonin, the hormonal treatment adopted by the jet set for jet lag, sleeplessness and loss of energy, triggered convulsions in vulnerable children.

Doctors at the Sleep Medicine Centre of the Children's Memorial Hospital, Chicago in the United States, gave the hormone to six disabled children who had trouble sleeping. They reasoned that since melatonin had been used for a variety of sleep problems with few side-

effects, it might help children with neurological problems who frequently have severe, long-standing sleep complaints.

They found that the treatment helped the children to sleep but increased the frequency of fits they suffered. As soon as the hormone was stopped, the fits either disappeared or their frequency returned to normal.

Although the children were prone to fits because of their brain damage, Dr Stephen Sheldan and colleagues say in the *Lancet* medical journal: that the "possible pro-convulsant effect" should be investigated because of the ease with which melatonin can be obtained. The hormone has been officially banned in

Britain but is still on open sale in some health-food shops and is widely sold in the US.

In a separate study, doctors from Hope Hospital, Salford, Greater Manchester, describe the case of a sportsman who took the food supplement creatine to boost his athletic performance. The man had a kidney problem which worsened suddenly after he began taking it but improved again when he stopped.

The researchers say that creatine, which helps build up the muscles, has been linked with the deaths of three American wrestlers but is freely available over the counter in Britain. Doctors should be aware that it is used at "excessive doses" by some individuals, they say.



Cutting the gags: Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer, who are to star in a new version of *Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)*

Comics add surreal touch to revival of Sixties detective series

By Paul McCann
Media Editor

THE trend for nostalgia television continued apace yesterday with the confirmation that the surreal comic duo, Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer, are to star in a new version of Seventies detective series *Randall and Hopkirk (Deceased)*.

Reeves will play the white-suited, ghost detective Marty Hopkirk, a ghost famous for walking through walls but standing by helpless while his living partner, Jeff Randall, gets beaten up.

The series is being written by Fast Show star Charlie Higson after originally being worked on by the writer James McInnes

last year. It is being made by the television arm of PolyGram, makers of *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, for the BBC which has ordered six 50-minute scripts. PolyGram bought the rights from Lord Grade's ITC television library and is using a loan from the European Media Two programme to fund development of the series.

"It's very much in the comedy-drama mould like *Jonathan Creek* and things like that," said Caroline Chignall, agent to Reeves and Mortimer. "You won't get gags *per se*. It's in the very early stages at the moment. The scripts are still being written and they won't give the final go-ahead until they have seen them. But they are keen to

do it and they were very big fans of the original series."

The original series, inspired by the Noel Coward play *Blithe Spirit*, was produced by Dennis Spooner, who made the other cult detective hit of the late Sixties, *Department S*. It ran from 1969 to 1971 and starred Kenneth Cope - formerly a *Coronation Street* actor - as Marty the detective killed in the first episode in a car accident. He hangs around to help his widow and his partner to solve crimes.

Reeves and Mortimer are famous for weird, but hilarious comedy shows like *The Smell of Reeves and Mortimer* and *Shooting Stars*. Charlie Higson, has been writing skits for them since the mid-Eighties.

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New measures to curb overuse of antibiotics

By Jeremy Laurence
Health Editor

MEASURES to curb the overuse of antibiotics were signalled by the Government's Chief Medical Officer yesterday as medical organisations warned that the world was in danger of losing its most important pharmacological weapon against disease.

Millions of tons of antibiotics had been released on the planet in the last 50 years, and the world was now bathed in a dilute solution of the drugs. But instead of destroying all microbes they had become resistant.

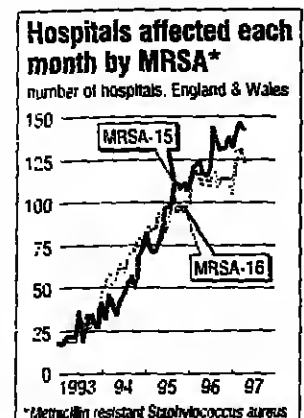
Sir Kenneth Calman said a major government review of the problem of growing bacterial resistance caused by antibiotic overuse would be published shortly.

He said he expected it to echo the findings of the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, chaired by Lord Soulsby, which on Wednesday warned that we were in danger of slipping back to the pre-antibiotic era as diseases emerged which were untreatable.

Speaking on the Radio 4 Today programme, Sir Kenneth said: "I think it's almost exactly in line with Lord Soulsby's

committee and I think it will be a series of very strong recommendations to GPs and hospital doctors about the proper use of antibiotics."

People had to understand that they did not need an antibiotic every time they went to



the doctor with a cough and a cold, he added. The drugs were, in any case, ineffective against viruses.

In Britain, an estimated 50 million prescriptions for antibiotics are issued by doctors every year.

Sometimes patients demand the drugs and doctors find it convenient to issue a prescription as a way of getting them out of the surgery.

The House of Lords report called for curbs on prescribing by doctors, a public education campaign and restrictions on the use of antibiotics in animals.

The problem is greatest in countries such as Spain where antibiotics are freely available over the counter. International concern has been mounting for years as new signs of bacterial resistance have emerged.

Stuart Levy, director of the centre for drug resistance at Tufts University, Boston, said: "Multidrug-resistant bacteria are increasing, patients are failing therapy and some are dying. That would have been unheard of ten years or even five years ago in some cases."

"The fact that we are losing any patients with multidrug-resistant disease who would have been saved a few years ago shows we are facing a crisis."

In the United States, over one in ten cases of infection with pneumococcus bacteria is a multidrug-resistant strain.

The bug causes 2 million cases of pneumonia, more than 7 million ear infections and 3,000 cases of meningitis each year, and patients have to be given vancomycin, a powerful antibiotic.

"We are one antibiotic short of being unable to treat them," Professor Levy said.

India flight beats queues in NHS

A PENSIONER sick of waiting for a cataract operation flew to India to avoid NHS queues, writes Diana Blomfield.

Noel Martin paid £60 for the operation - which he said would have cost around £3,000 at a private hospital in Britain.

The 70-year-old, from Chertsey, in Surrey, said he would return to India if he ever needs treatment again. "I was

expecting to wait a long time - my brother waited more than a year for a cataract operation."

Mr Martin, who was born and raised in India, saw his GP in September last year about the cataract. In his right eye, and had an appointment to see a specialist in mid-January.

He was told a private operation would cost £2,000-£3,000. In January the sight in his

right eye had deteriorated and he decided to take a £330 flight to India. The operation was performed at a clinic in Ajmer, 300 miles south of Delhi.

Dr Rachel Tyndall, deputy chief executive of West Surrey Health Authority, said: "The maximum waiting time for routine non-urgent cataract operations at the four hospitals in West Surrey is 18 months."



High tech: The atrium of the newly opened rail terminal at Heathrow airport. Trains taking 15 minutes will start running to and from Paddington in June. Photograph: John Voos

MI6 thwarts Iranian plot to get nuclear technology

By Jason Bennetto
and Fran Abrams

AGENTS from Iran have been caught trying to obtain materials and technology in Britain to build nuclear weapons abroad, it emerged yesterday.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said last night that in the past year MI6, the Secret Intelligence Service, and the listening base at GCHQ in Cheltenham, had "tracked Iran's nuclear weapons programme, and have enabled us to disrupt Iranian attempts to procure British technology".

He also revealed that the two intelligence services had played a "crucial role" in revealing Saddam Hussein's biological and chemical weapons programmes in Iraq.

Iran has long been suspected of trying to obtain information and technology from Britain to help with its nuclear programme. An Israeli intelligence report has concluded that Iran is only two years away from building a nuclear bomb, although British and US assessments suggest it would take Tehran five to 10 years.

MI5, the security service, has warned universities, colleges, and research centres about the potential dangers of providing places to foreign postgraduate students, including Iranians, who are sent to this country by their government to obtain information and skills to assist the manufacture of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons when they return home.

A security source yesterday confirmed that Mr Cook was referring to successful counter-espionage work carried out by British agents against Iranians attempting to obtain technology from the United Kingdom in the past year. The MI6 and GCHQ operations are understood to include the prevention

of efforts to smuggle materials used to build nuclear weapons.

Mr Cook's comments, made during a speech in London last night, are believed to be the first official confirmation of Iranian attempts to obtain technology in the UK and the first time a Foreign Secretary has spoken so openly about the work of MI6.

The American administration has reportedly been pressing President Boris Yeltsin to stop Russian scientists and military institutes from helping the Iranians to develop a ballistic missile that could reach Israel and Saudi Arabia.

Experts from MI6, MI5, GCHQ, Customs and Excise, and the Department of Trade, run a counter-proliferation programme aimed at preventing countries from obtaining technology and information useful in developing nuclear arms.

On the question of MI6 and GCHQ's role in providing intelligence about Iraq, Mr Cook said: "They have played a crucial role in revealing Saddam Hussein's biological and chemical weapons programmes, and his continuing ambitions to stockpile these weapons of mass destruction."

Mr Cook, who was accompanied by his new wife, Gaynor, at the City of London's Easter Banquet, also praised the work by the security services in helping Customs and police to seize tonnes of drugs, and make dozens of arrests as well as protecting the financial sector from money launderers and fraudsters.

Mr Cook said he had been impressed by the work of the security services during Labour's first year in office.

He also used his speech to mount a defence of Britain's new ethical foreign policy. The Government had proved that there was a "Third Way" in foreign as well as in domestic policy, he said.

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- 2. Prepayment meters**
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- 5. Your connection to the distribution network**
When you sign the contract for the supply of electricity you are also entering into a 'Standard Connection Agreement' with your local network operator, by which you agree to standard terms for your connection to the electricity network.
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Warts
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Bleak times in Birtland

FOR the past few years staff at the BBC have been leaking amusing examples of a soulless bureaucratic language called "Birtpeak" to *Private Eye* and other places. No doubt this struck the BBC Director-General John Birt as childish ridicule of perfectly sound modern corporate English usage. However, the latest issue of *Private Eye*, the BBC's in-house magazine, offers definitive proof in Birt's own words that such a heartless language exists. Offering gushing praise (in Birtland terms) for Rupert Gavin, the newly appointed chief executive of BBC Worldwide, John Birt is quoted as saying, "RG's experience in creative etc make him perfect for the job".

Master stroke for Hansen

BEFORE we leave the BBC, Pandora is concerned to hear reports of outrage amongst some of the most established television broadcasters at the corporation's sports division. Apparently Alan Hansen, the former Liverpool FC captain who now regularly occupies a pundit's chair on *Match of the Day*, has been given the plum assignment of hosting a documentary history of the Masters golf tournament at Augusta National. Why pick a footballer to front a programme on golf? Some observers say the BBC was concerned in case the popular Hansen might be thinking of jumping ship to ITV.

Peerless performance

MEMBERS of the House of Lords become rather huffy when the issue of their absenteeism is raised. Pandora is afraid that they will have nowhere to run when confronted by the latest shocking example of their non-appearance. Fifteen Members of Parliament, including new Labour MPs Jim Murphy and Jim Fitzgerald, arrived at the splendid training ground of Charlton FC recently expecting to play the Lords' first XI. But their Lordships failed to show. "It's another nail in their coffin," said Alan Simpson, star striker of the MPs' team.

When it finally hit the fan

AFTER all these years of talking about it, the world's worst apocryphal event has finally happened. It took place in a court room in Colombo, Sri Lanka last week. The man in the dock, Subasinghe Premasiri, was accused of stealing five gas cookers. Hiddeo in his pocket was a plastic bag of excrement. Suddenly, the prisoner revealed his surprise package and attempted to throw it at a police officer. He missed, however, and it hit a courtroom fan instead. The trial had to be adjourned so that everyone could wash and change their clothes. Pandora is pleased to report that, after the adjournment, the perpetrator was found guilty of contempt and sentenced to eight months.

Pandora

By Randeep Ramesh
Transport Correspondent

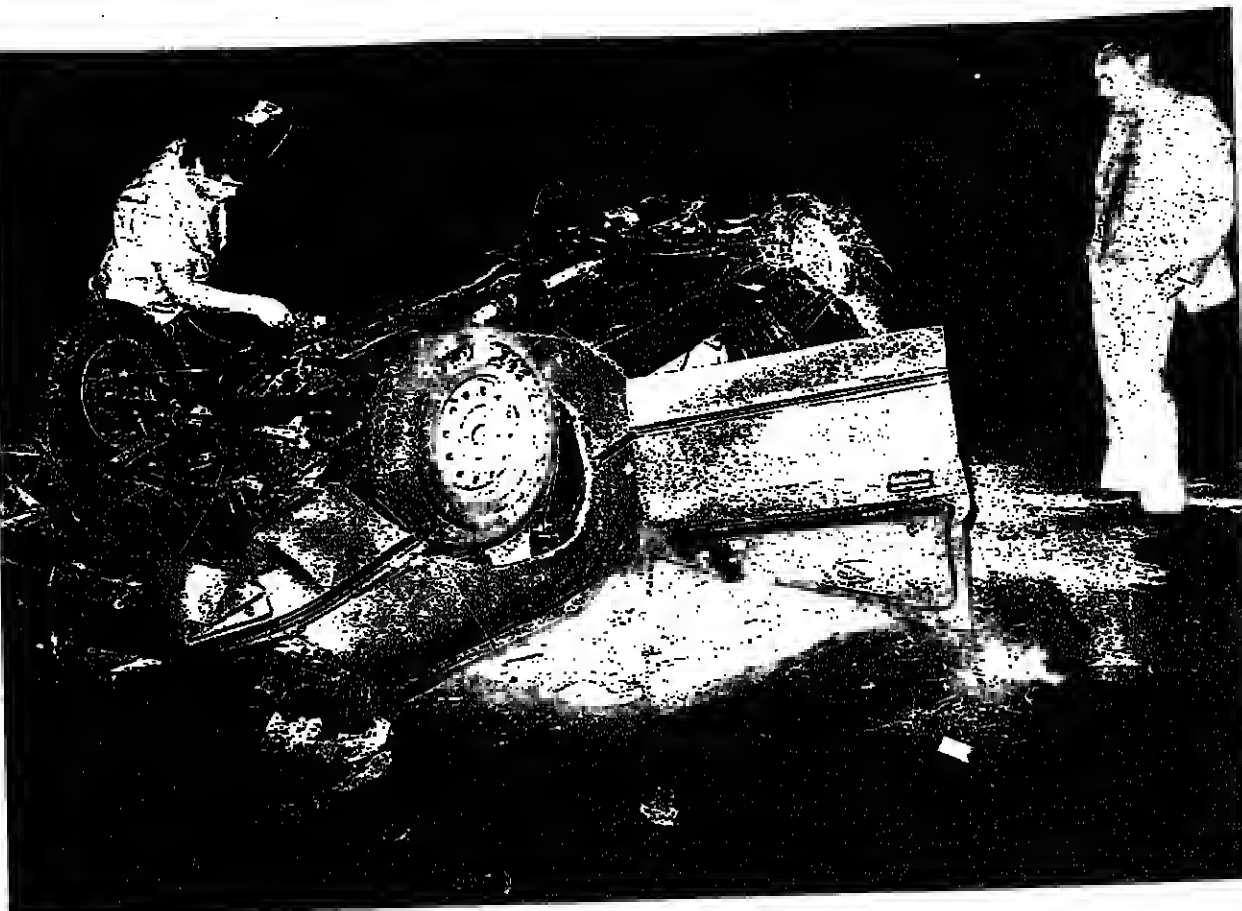
HUNDREDS of lives could be saved on the nation's roads if British car passengers were to belt up in the back, according to European transport commissioner Neil Kinnock.

In an exclusive interview with *The Independent*, Mr Kinnock said the "level of adherence" to the law - which since 1991 has required passengers in the back to wear seat belts - is less than 60 per cent in Britain.

This is better than most countries on the Continent but worse than Sweden, where more than four-fifths of passengers in the back wear belts. Mr Kinnock also acknowledged that enforcement of the law is better in Britain than abroad.

"We do get testimony from Greek police officers and we believe them - but there are no reliable figures on how well the law is enforced in Europe. However, the enforcement levels are reflected in the levels of adherence," said Mr Kinnock.

Seat belts saved Mr Kinnock's life on two occasions. The most memorable was on the night of 12 July 1983. As he sped along the M4 from his South Wales constituency to the Commons for a debate on hanging, his Ford Sierra overturned and careered 100 yards before stopping in a mangled heap. Mr Kinnock emerged unscathed from a shattered window.



Close shaver: Neil Kinnock standing by the wreckage of his car after it careered off the road in 1983. He said a seat belt saved his life

The commissioner is in Britain to launch a safety drive today aimed at asking motorists to make simple checks - such as adjusting head restraints and using seat belts - to reduce the 45,000 death toll on Europe's roads.

Many motorists are killed by "impact weight" - the force

generated by objects that fly through the car as it is violently brought to a stop. An analysis of police accident reports released today will show that at least 46 front seat car occupants are killed every year in the UK in car crashes by rear seat passengers flung forward by the force of the impact.

British ministers confirmed to *The Independent* that they were considering launching a campaign of random police stops where passengers in the rear would face on-the-spot £20 fines for not belting up.

Mr Kinnock is a vocal advocate of seat belts. "I used to attach the things even when I

was a student and drove old bangers," said Mr Kinnock yesterday. "It certainly saved my life then." He has also seen the mayhem that not wearing belts can cause. In 1989, the then Labour leader found himself in an "ancient Mercedes limo" which had no seat belts on the way to Dublin airport when the

driver collapsed with a heart attack.

"I only had seconds but I dived across to protect Glenys," said Mr Kinnock. "I was okay but Glenys ended up with no skin on her leg - it was just bare bone. I am sure that would not have been the case if we had seat belts fitted."

Every year in the UK at least 46 front-seat car occupants are killed in car crashes when rear-seat passengers are flung forward

Catalogue of misconduct by university chiefs revealed

By Ben Russell
Education Correspondent

NATIONAL Audit Office officials called for universities to give extra protection to whistleblowers yesterday after revealing a catalogue of alleged misconduct by a former university head.

A report by the NAO out-

lines a string of allegations made against the principal of Glasgow Caledonian University, Professor Stan Mason, after an investigation centred on allegations of "jobs for the boys" and claims about Professor Mason's two company cars.

In three cases, the report said, Professor Masoo had abused his authority over the ap-

pointment of three staff, including his daughter-in-law, to catering or student support jobs.

Two other staff members were also criticised over the affair.

In another case, the NAO report said Professor Mason had acted improperly by having "more or less exclusive use" of

a university Jaguar XJ6 while he was also running a top-of-the-range Saab 900 provided by a university company. The report said Professor Mason even negotiated a £2,400 "garaging fee" to compensate him for keeping the Jaguar at home for two years.

The Saab was sold to Professor Mason for £2,000 less

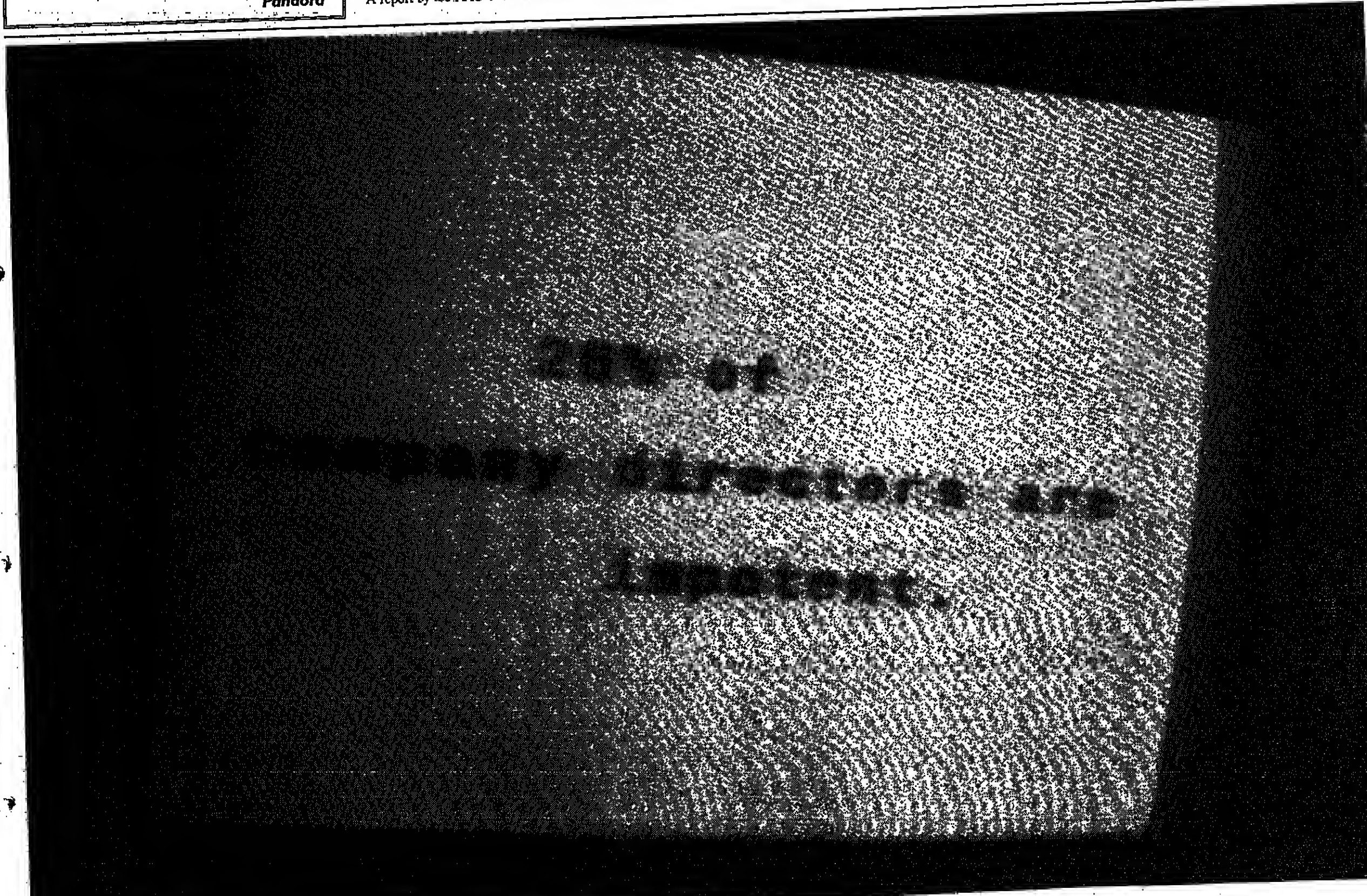
than it was worth. He later sold the Jaguar for £20,500, about £3,500 less than its market value, the report said.

The university was ordered to recover more than £50,000 for the use of the two company cars and ask him to pay back the £2,500 "garaging fee".

David Davis, chairman of the Commons Public Accounts

Committee, said: "What concerns me most is not so much the detail of what went wrong, but that the checks and balances which should prevent these problems arising and protect public money were absent."

Professor Masoo, who denied the claims, was sacked in September. The university declined to comment last night.



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Women with fizz: Four of the five nominees for Yeuvre Clicquot Businesswoman of the Year celebrating yesterday. Clockwise from back left: Christian Rucker, Janis Kong, Jill Sinclair and Tamara Ingram. Photograph: Kalpesh Lathigra

One firm in eight fails to tackle the 2000 bug

By Charles Arthur
Science and Technology Editor

ONE in eight British businesses has taken no action to tackle the computer "millennium bug", and almost all have no intention of doing so - despite the fact that another one in ten companies is already experiencing problems caused by it.

The indifference "begs the question" according to Don Cruickshank, head of the Government's Action 2000 group, which aims to help firms tackle the problem. Yet it is widespread among small firms and agricultural distributors - where one-third of companies are doing nothing - followed by builders and trucking firms.

By comparison, many hospitals are planning to double their staff over the millennium evening and to have spare re-

sources if the failures predicted by some observers - such as air-conditioning and electricity - occur. "That's not like the contingency plan for other major incidents, because you don't know when those are going to arrive," said Mr Cruickshank.

He warned the companies which are ignoring warnings that there was "no simple solution that's going to come along that they can just pick up - and the real solution will cost more the longer you wait". The cost of fixing the problem, whose extent is impossible to estimate, would rise rapidly.

But, he added, those who hoped the problem would pass them by would find customers leaving and auditors refusing to sign off their accounts.

A number of companies are already having problems caused by the bug, which is tripped

when a program tries to deal with dates beyond December 1999 - because many computers store the year as a two-figure number and so cannot discern between the 20th and 21st centuries.

Some have arisen in NHS administrative systems, such as those which advise patients of recall dates for breast cancer screening.

But most have occurred in financial planning involving spreadsheets and accountancy procedures, said Gwyneth Flower, director of Action 2000.

"This suggests something we knew already - that as companies move into detailed budgeting that crosses into 2000, there will be a higher incidence of problems," said Ms Flower. "But there's also an insidious nature to it because you don't know if there might be

other mistakes you've missed."

Mr Cruickshank praised Tony Blair's efforts in publicising the problem. After the Prime Minister's speech last month in which he emphasised the risks posed by the bug, the Action 2000 hotline received 10,000 calls a day - 25 times more than its normal level.

"As a mechanism for getting something done and agreeing budgets, a Prime Minister's speech has a lot to recommend it," said Mr Cruickshank. The issue is now dealt with by a Cabinet Office committee and since Mr Blair's speech "attendance is by more senior people and it's more regular. Nobody is going to say companies like BT and Unilever are spending £400m a year on a problem that doesn't exist."

■ The Action 2000 hotline is on 0845 601 2000

South Downs lose out to New Forest

By Linus Gregoriadis

NATIONAL Park status should be conferred on the New Forest, but not on the South Downs, the Countryside Commission recommended yesterday.

The Government's landscape advisory body voted in favour of proposing that the New Forest should enjoy the same protection and prestige as the nation's National Parks, but should not actually become one.

A spokesperson for the Countryside Commission said: "We will recommend 'tailor-made' legislation which will be more appropriate to the needs of the New Forest than would be the case if it were to be a National Park."

At a meeting in Leeds yesterday, nine commissioners also

"The commission said that National Park status would confer more than the required powers on the South Downs - even though it is one of the most vulnerable landscapes in the country. They are saying that it doesn't qualify for the status but it meets all the legal requirements."

"We are calling on Michael Meacher, the environment minister, to listen to what people are saying, rather than what the Countryside Commission claims."

Elizabeth Cooper, rural policy officer at the Council for the Protection of Rural England, said: "They may have something up their sleeves as regards the power of the new authority."

"But I think its national importance will stand out more if it becomes one of 10 National Parks. The South Downs has more visitors than any National Park."

Chris Todd, of Friends of the Earth, said: "The Countryside Commission is serving its own interests above those of the countryside. Their credibility is being seriously called into question."

Richard Simmonds, of the Countryside Commission, insisted that yesterday's proposals, which will be put to the Government in the summer, are the best way forward.

He said: "Our recommendations are a vital practical step towards finding solutions to the management of this important area. The commission received a wide range of views and has been at pains to find the best solution, one which would be prompt and practical and which would create the most effective and workable organisation."

Meanwhile, Malwina Drummond, chairman of the New Forest Committee, which has been pressing for proper legal protection for the area, welcomed the proposals.

He said: "We would give a broad welcome to what the Countryside Commission has proposed. We are very pleased but it is up to the Government to say whether they are going to agree."

The South Downs has more visitors than any National Park

voted in favour of a proposal, revealed exclusively by *The Independent* on Monday, to keep the South Downs as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The 50-mile range of chalk hills, which runs from Eastbourne in East Sussex to Winchester in Hampshire, should be the responsibility of a new authority armed with special new powers, the commission will recommend.

The South Downs Campaign Group, which takes in 15 local and national bodies including the Council for the Protection of Rural England and the Council for National Parks, reacted angrily yesterday.

Amanda Nobbs, the group's spokeswoman, said: "This is hard to believe when you consider that 62 per cent of the public called for the South Downs to have National Park status, compared with 18 per cent who opposed it."

DAILY POEM

I am Raftery

by Anthony Raftery (Irish, c.1820), translated by Douglas Hyde

I am Raftery the poet,
Full of hope and love,
With eyes that have no light,
With gentleness that has no misery.

Going west upon my pilgrimage
By the light of my heart,
Feeble and tired
To the end of my road.

Behold me now,
And my face to a wall,
A playing music
Unto empty pockets.

This is our last selection from the 1,300-page compendium *World Poetry: an anthology of verse from antiquity to our time*. The book is edited by Katharine Washburn, John S Major and Clifton Fadiman (WW Norton, £25), and published this week to coincide with World Book Day.

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Eagle Star
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Tories go to war over new rules on private cash

By Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

A FRESH crackdown on MPs' private earnings enraged senior Tory MPs last night and led to warnings that it would spark a bloody battle in the House of Commons.

The MPs are angry over proposals by Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, for a "significant tightening of the rules" over the declaration of members' interests.

His proposals would mean that, for the first time, MPs would have to declare all their outside earnings, gained after they were elected to Parliament.

A number of former senior Tory ministers have taken on lucrative directorships since losing office on 1 May last year. They would be forced to declare all their private earnings if the change takes place. It could also require some Tory grandees, such as Sir Edward Heath, the former prime minister, and Archie Hamilton, chairman of the Tory backbench 1922 Committee of MPs, to be more explicit in their declarations of

interests. "It's completely unacceptable and outrageous," said a member of William Hague's Shadow Cabinet. "It's a step towards having full-time MPs. It's typical of this government."

Other MPs last night warned there would be a "bloody row" about the rules, but a Labour spokesman welcomed the move, saying: "We want transparency and therefore we would welcome anything which clarified matters, which at the moment are murky, which might create problems, embarrassment or confusion."

The changes would have to be endorsed by a free vote in the Commons, but with Labour backing they are almost certain to be adopted. Robert Sheldon, chairman of the cross-party Standards and Privileges Committee, has written to all MPs saying that Sir Gordon found "uncertainties and inconsistencies" under the present rules, which were tightened in 1995 to disclose amounts paid for private earnings in addition to the MPs' salary.

Under the existing rules, MPs are required to declare

only those interests involving their role as MPs. Sir Archie, for example, declares he is paid up to £15,000 for a consultancy with Merrill Lynch Europe Limited, investment bankers, but says it is part of a "wider agreement" which does not have to be disclosed.

Mr Sheldon told MPs: "We think it is essential that the rules of the House should be expressed clearly... Any rule will give rise to anomalies: the question is whether the House wishes to err on the side of more openness or less."

One former Tory minister earned a reputed £4m a year from 12 directorships after he was sacked from the Cabinet, but the sums involved never had to be declared, because they were not judged to be part of his role as an MP. Sir Gordon said some MPs had been criticised for "flouting the spirit of the rules".

The changes would allow MPs to avoid declaring interests which they gained before becoming MPs, but they would have to declare everything they earned from posts gained after being elected.

From Dickens to Trotsky, Blair spells out his literary influences



Children greeting Tony Blair at the Globe Theatre in London to mark World Book Day. Mr Blair said Dickens was one of his favourite authors but also revealed that in his student days one of his most-thumbed books was a biography of the Communist Leon Trotsky. Photograph: John Sullivan

MP charged over election expenses

By Fran Abrams
Political Correspondent

A LABOUR MP was facing the possibility of disqualification and even a prison sentence last night after being charged with submitting false election expenses. Fiona Jones, the new-

ly-elected MP for Newark in Nottinghamshire, will appear at Nottingham Magistrates' court on 22 May, charged with an offence under the 1983 Representation of the People Act. It is highly unusual for such charges to be brought even though allegations of election

expenses irregularities are common. The last recorded conviction of an MP for submitting false election expenses was in 1923. Depending on the seriousness of the allegation, which was not clear last night, she could face a possible maximum prison sentence of one year or an unlimited fine. If found guilty of a corrupt practice under electoral law she could be disqualified from the House of Commons.

Mrs Jones, who is 41, won the seat from the Conservative MP Richard Alexander by 3,016 votes. Both she and her election agent, Des Whitcher, who also faces prosecution, deny that the return in Newark was deliberately false in any way. The expenses were declared at £8,514, some £400 less than the permitted limit.

Last night Labour sources said the allegations against her were not serious enough to warrant her suspension from the Parliamentary Labour Party unless she is convicted.

A Labour party spokesman said both Mr Whitcher, who was responsible for completing the return, and Mrs Jones denied that the return was deliberately false in any way.

"We wish to say that Fiona Jones is an excellent constituency MP who has fully justified the confidence placed in her by the voters of Newark constituency at the last general election," he said.

Mrs Jones said she had won the seat "fairly and squarely."

"The return, which is a public document, was placed with the returning officer in good faith by the agent. In my view,

it's an honest reflection of the costs of all campaign activities covered by the Representation of the People Act. I haven't done anything wrong, and I'm disappointed at the action being taken," she said.

Mrs Jones, who is married with two children, was a journalist before becoming an MP. She was elected as one of Labour's record 101 women MPs when the party won its landslide victory last May. She was a West Lindsey district councillor from 1990 to 1994, and her special interests are employment, crime and health.

Mr Whitcher, 72, said: "As far as Fiona and I are concerned, we were quite happy with the returns that were submitted. We are disappointed really that the police and CPS have taken the view they have."

Labour looks to years in power

By Anthony Bevis
Political Editor

WITH his first anniversary coming up next week, Tony Blair yesterday told his Cabinet: "One good year is not enough. I want five good years."

The Prime Minister, who went out of his way to praise the way in which his colleagues had "taken to government", said the first anniversary was not a time for celebration or congratulation "but time to renew our efforts, continue the work in progress to deliver better schools, better hospitals, better jobs, the attack on crime".

Last night, the Prime Minister spoke at a £500-a-head fund-raising gala dinner in London. Among the business sponsors were John Rose, chairman of Rolls Royce; supermarket chairman David Sainsbury; Shaun Astley, managing director of Thomas Cook; Gerry Robinson, chairman of Granada; and Will Whitehorn, a director of the Virgin Group.

Other guests included Sir Trevor Nunn, director of the National Theatre, and actress Barbara Windsor.

In his political pep-talk to Cabinet, Mr Blair said that the



Windsor: Gala guest

Government was preparing another action-packed legislative programme for next autumn.

"We will legislate to consign the [NHS] internal market to history," he said. "We will press ahead with welfare reform, on the pensions Green Paper, the Child Support Agency reform, the report on consultation re disability benefits. There are tough choices ahead."

Home Office minister Mike O'Brien is expected to announce today that a £300,000 cut in the Commission for Racial Equality's budget, planned by the last government, would be revoked. Sir Herman Ouseley is to be given a further term as commission chairman.

Doncaster names campaign

DONCASTER councillors who are standing in next month's local elections despite being under investigation for over-claiming expenses should be named campaigners say, writes Fran Abrams.

A group called "Name the Names" will petition the Audit Commission in London today, saying voters should know whether candidates were under suspicion or not.

A district auditor's investigation has been going on for more than two years in Doncaster after allegations of junketing and of corrupt land deals. Although an interim report named four senior figures as particularly culpable, both the investigation and a parallel police exercise are still going on.

Jean Moffat, one of the campaign's organisers, said the group had written to Tony Blair and John Prescott as well as to local MPs but had received only short, formal replies. "We demand to know the names of councillors involved in irregularities in order to make an informed choice at the local election in May," she said.

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Father's terror at legacy of CJD doses

A MAN injected with growth hormone as a child gave emotional evidence to the High Court today about his fear of contracting CJD, the human form of "Mad Cow" disease.

Former factory worker Neil Scanlon, 36, of Ebbw Vale, Cardiff, described how he was "devastated" when he realised he was at risk of contracting the incurable fatal disease.

Mr Scanlon, a father of two, whose wife, Mandy, was in the courtroom with him, broke down in tears in the witness box as he told Mr Justice Morland in London of how deeply his life had been affected.

Mr Scanlon is one of six people living in fear of developing CJD who are involved in a test case at the High Court, claiming damages for psychiatric injury. The court has heard that they were all "negligently" treated as children with human growth hormone from corpses. They say they have developed a psychiatric illness as a result

of Claire Johnston, 29, and Justin Parkes, 27, the defendant considered that no psychiatric illness has been sustained.

The CJD litigation was started in 1996 by parents of children who died after being given growth hormone extracted from corpses to combat dwarfism. Between 1959 and 1985 nearly 2,000 children in the UK, whose growth was stunted because of a deficiency in the secretion of growth hormone in their pituitaries, were treated with hormone from the pituitary glands of cadavers. The programme was brought to an end in May 1985 after several children who had been treated in the US died of CJD.

In July 1996 Mr Justice Morland ruled that the Department of Health was negligent in not heeding the warning of Dr Alan Dickinson, who in 1977 told the Medical Research Council about the risk of contracting CJD from the hormone treatment.

Last year, people who were given the hormone treatment and claim they have suffered a psychiatric illness brought on by fear of contracting the disease were given the go-ahead by the same judge to seek compensation.

I was devastated. I already had one child. I thought 'Are my children going to have it?'

of being told that they may be incubating the CJD (Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease) agent.

The plaintiffs - Mr Scanlon, Paul Andrews, from Putney, London; David Lockhart, from Newmarket, Suffolk; Philip Johnston, from Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire; his sister, Claire, who lives near Cheddle, Staffordshire; and Justin Parkes from Essex - are representative cases for a group of 35 people treated with growth hormone after July 1, 1977, who say they are now suffering from psychiatric illness.

In the cases of Mr Scanlon, Paul Andrews, 32, David Lockhart, 27, and Philip Johnston, 25, it was accepted by the defendant, the Secretary of State for Health, that psychiatric illness had been caused by learning of the risk of developing CJD. In those cases the dispute between the parties is over the nature and severity of the illness and the extent of damages which may be recoverable.

In the so-called "mild" cases of Claire Johnston, 29, and Justin Parkes, 27, the defendant considered that no psychiatric illness has been sustained.

Child killer is given 20 years

A DRUG addict who tortured and murdered his girlfriend's seven-year-old daughter was yesterday jailed for a minimum of 20 years.

Paul Gaye, 32, was part way through his trial at Manchester Crown Court when he changed his plea to guilty of the murder of Suzanne Rarity.

Her body was found in an upstairs bedroom of her house in Moss Side, Manchester. She had suffered more than 100 separate injuries.

Suzanne, who was found on 27 June last year, had been imprisoned in her room for five days, beaten and tortured.

Sentencing Gaye, Mr Justice Douglas Brown, said: "In the last week of her life you kept her prisoner in her room and towards the end of the week you treated her with the utmost violence.

"You tortured her, beat her, punched her and almost certainly kicked her, inflicting what a pathologist said was 100 separate injuries.

"The... defence...

"I regard you as not only evil, but dangerous."

Gaye had moved in with Suzanne's mother Angela in April 1997. The court heard how he had taken control of family life.

In the week before her death Suzanne had been punished for breaking a video remote control and for allegedly lying about having a wash.

The court heard that Gaye had locked Suzanne in her room six days before her body was found. Gaye kept the keys to her room and reduced contact between mother and daughter.

On the first day of the trial Suzanne's mother had told the court she felt unable to help. She said: "How could I protect my daughter if I couldn't get near her. Do you think if I couldn't have done something to save her, I wouldn't have done it?"

Suzanne died on 20 June. Her body was found 36 hours later.

Justice Brown praised...



Bright eye: Brian Davis, chief executive of the Nationwide building society, with the world's first iris cash machine which scans a cardholder's eye for identification, thus doing away with pin numbers. The ATM began a six-month trial in Swindon yesterday

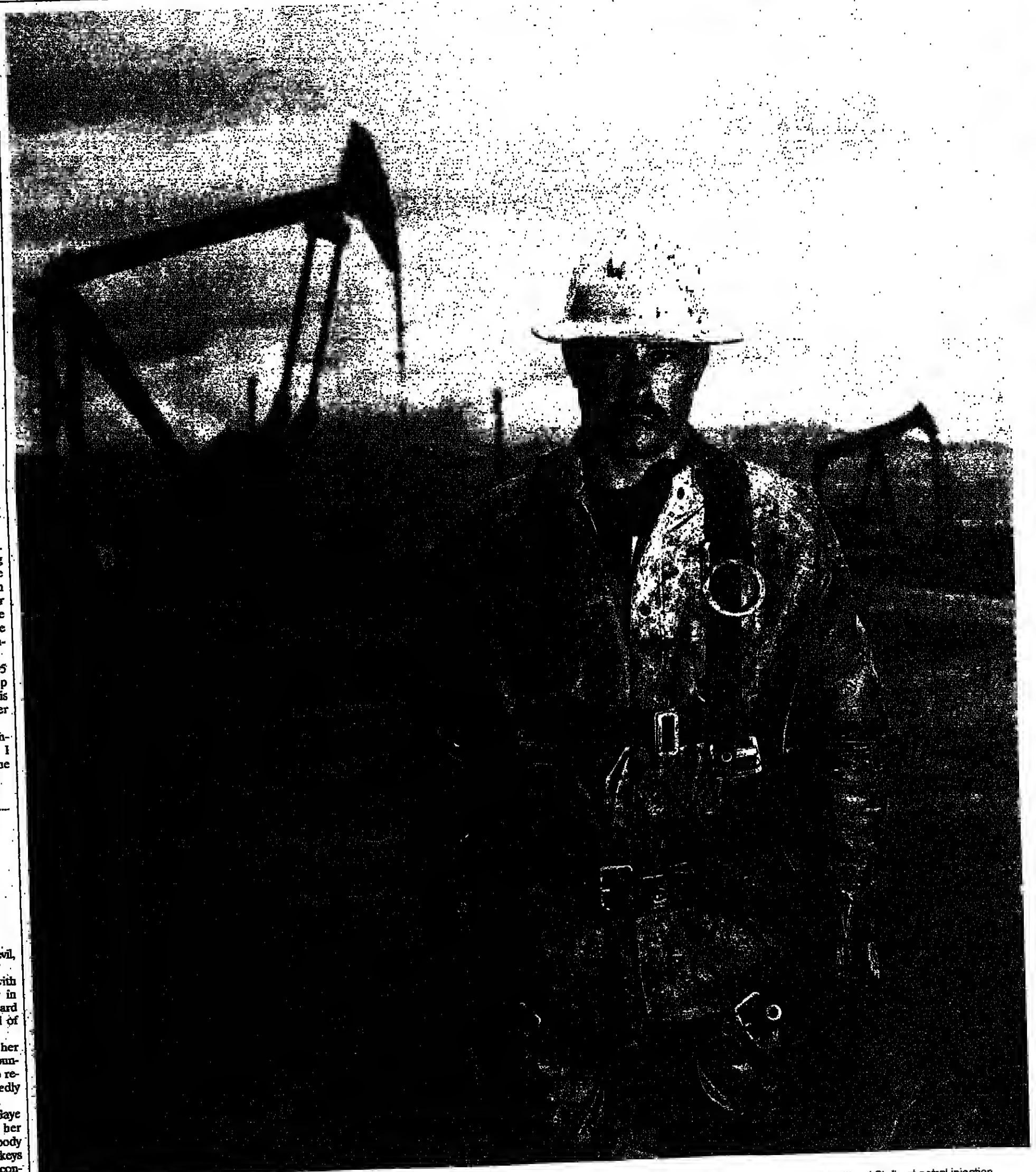
Helicopter crash leaves four dead

THREE members of the same family and another man died in a helicopter crash, it emerged yesterday. The crash happened as their Robinson R-44 crashed into woodland near Market Harborough, Leicestershire, late on Sunday evening.

Those who died were named as Andrew Byrne, 36, and his wife, Helen Linhart, 31, both of Desford, Leicestershire; Mrs Linhart's sister Katie Linhart, 36, of Whitwick, Leicestershire, and James Coulter, 36, of Market Harborough.

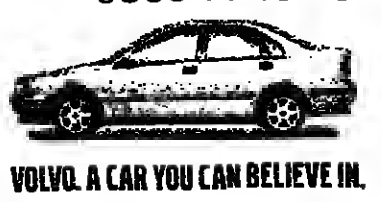
The alarm was raised on Sunday night by local people who heard an aircraft in trouble. But an overnight search by police and mountain rescue teams failed to find the wreckage. A member of the public saw it at a remote spot early on Monday.

The Department of Transport's Air Accidents Investigation Branch was investigating the accident. The aircraft was hired from Stoughton Airfield, Leicester. It is believed that Mr Coulter was at the controls. An inquest into the deaths was opened and adjourned yesterday. A spokesman for the family confirmed that the deaths of Andrew Byrne and Helen Linhart had left three children as orphans.



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UN concerned as unrest grows in asylum centres

By Ian Burrell
Home Affairs Correspondent

THERE is growing concern over unrest in Britain's detention centres, where asylum seekers are staging hunger strikes in protest at their conditions. Prison officers wearing riot control gear have moved into dormitories to apprehend alleged ringleaders and take them to prison. Protests this week at Haslar detention centre in Hampshire and at Rochester in Kent followed last week's criticisms by Sir David Ramsbotham, the chief inspector of prisons, of conditions at Campfield House detention centre in Oxfordshire. Sir David warned that conditions were "unsafe" at Campfield, where the sudden removal of two asylum seekers to prison last August was the trigger for a serious disturbance. Last night, the London office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said it was concerned that asylum seekers were held in worse conditions in Britain than in other European Union countries. Peter

Van der Vaart, the deputy representative, said: "We also don't think that they should be held in prisons with criminals." Alasdair Mackenzie, co-chair of the Asylum Rights Campaign, said it was "disgraceful" that asylum seekers had no redress to a formal complaints or disciplinary procedure. He said: "An allegation is made that they are being disruptive and they are bailed off to prison without charge or trial or any chance to defend themselves." The protests at Haslar began on Sunday night and at one point more than 100 detainees – the great majority of those in the centre – were refusing food in protest at conditions and the amount of time being taken to deal with their cases. Several contacted *The Independent* to complain. Charles Amichi, who had fled the civil unrest in Liberia to come to Britain, has been at Haslar for two months after being arrested as an illegal immigrant in London. Mr Amichi, who was a political leader in Liberia, said: "Nobody is listening to us. We are very frustrated and we

are not even allowed outside." Rockson Dua, 34, a Ghanaian, has been living in Britain for eight years, has three children in London and has been working for London Transport. He said he was detained earlier this month after being told that his application for asylum "had been cancelled". He said: "It's very, very painful. I have never committed any crime and I have never had a penny from the Government, yet I am locked up." On Tuesday afternoon, prison officers moved in and took 10 detainees to High Down prison in Surrey and other prison establishments. The prison service said yesterday that the action had been successful in bringing the Haslar food protest to an end. A spokesman said the 10 were removed "because they were attempting to disrupt the running of the establishment and inciting other detainees to do the same". At Rochester, three asylum seekers are in the fourth day of a hunger protest, which at one point involved 40 detainees.



Hunt the dragon: Speaker of the Commons Betty Boothroyd walking in London with Alexander Leighton, of East Molesey, Surrey, and Kiesha Lewis, of west London, both 10, for St George's Day

Nanny is given bail

THE Australian nanny who is accused in connection with the death of six-month-old Caroline Jorgensen was given conditional bail by an Old Bailey judge yesterday. Louise Sullivan, 26 – who was not in court for the 10-minute bail application – will be released on £2,500 surety to reside at an address provided in the court. Her passport must be surrendered and she must not contact her previous employer. The nanny's mother, Robyn – who was in court for the application before the Recorder of London, Sir Lawrence Verney – left without comment.

Whitehall paper chase

CIVIL servants in a Whitehall department who sort waste paper so it can be recycled are wasting their time, a government minister disclosed yesterday. Giving evidence to the Green Audit committee of MPs at the Commons, John Battle, the industry minister, said he visited the Whitehall department – which he did not name – and went through the basement, and talked to the binmen responsible for moving tonnes of waste paper. "The binman said to me 'I don't know why they [the civil servants] bother to recycle it because we just chuck it in a bin and burn it,' he said. The practice on recycling and green issues in Whitehall was 'so bad, I wouldn't have the nerve to go out to industry and tell them how run their own show'."

Independent schools gain more pupils

By Judith Judd
Education Editor

PUPIL numbers in independent schools rose by 1.6 per cent this year, helped by the expansion of the assisted-places scheme introduced by the previous government, according to figures published yesterday.

The extra places on the scheme, which subsidises pupils from poor backgrounds in private schools, accounted for 40 per cent of the rise in numbers. The Government has abolished the scheme but independent school heads said yesterday that they were confident the demand for private places would remain strong.

Figures from the annual census of 1,300 schools by the Independent Schools Information Service (Isis) show that the proportion of pupils they educate remains unchanged, at about 7 per cent. During the boom of the late Eighties the figure rose to about 7.2 per cent. The strongest growth in numbers is among nursery and primary pupils as more parents of young children go out to work. The number of secondary day pupils fell slightly and the decline in boarding continued.

Overall, the increase is the second largest since 1987 and is the third successive annual rise after a decline during the recession of the early Nineties. This autumn's intake will be the first to be affected by the Government's decision to abolish the assisted-places scheme.

Patrick Tobin, principal of Stewart Melville College and Mary Erskine School, Edinburgh, and chairman of the Headmasters and Head-

mistresses' conference, said: "In my two schools in Edinburgh we have seen no sign of a downturn in numbers for next year. Schools have been pleasantly surprised that applications have not fallen."

He predicted that the type of person coming to independent schools was bound to change as a result of the scheme's abolition because the poorest would not be able to afford the fees. "It is inescapable that we shall have a bigger proportion of full fee-payers." However, he pointed out that many schools had set up bursaries for poorer pupils. His own had received a £4.4m bequest.

David Dinmore, bursar of Silcoates School, Wakefield, and chairman of the Independent Schools Bursars' Association, said beneficiaries were coming forward across the country to pay for bursaries and governors were devising imaginative ways for raising money.

Yesterday's figures, which include the vast majority of independent schools, show that the number of foreign pupils has declined for the first time in some years, partly because of the economic crisis in the Far East. Numbers from Hong Kong dropped by 20.8 per cent and from Taiwan by 11.8 per cent. But there is growing interest in British fee-paying schools in China where a successful independent school exhibition was staged recently.

David Woodhead, director of Isis, said: "This has been another very good year for independent schools. Very strong growth through all the pre-school and junior ages is particularly encouraging."

Battle to save sharks

EXPERTS at the new National Marine Aquarium are battling to save six sharks which suffered hypothermia during a 24-hour flight from Florida. They are the survivors of 10 sharks delivered to the £15m Plymouth-based Aquarium earlier this month from a marine centre in the US.

During the 4,500-mile flight, the aircraft was delayed for three hours in a snowstorm in Amsterdam and the water temperature in the shark tanks fell to 10°C. Three sandbar sharks died within 24 hours, and a nurse shark had died within the past few days, the aquarium's chief executive, Mike Leese, said yesterday. The aquarium's head curator, Juan Romero, said the six left had an 80 per cent chance of survival.

Carer quizzed over death

A WOMAN aged 31 and an 11-year-old boy, thought to be her son, have been questioned in connection with the death of a baby boy. The eight-month-old child died on Wednesday in St George's Hospital, Tooting, south-west London, two days after being admitted and put on a life-support machine.

Scotland Yard said the woman was caring for the baby in her Balham home, in south-west London, while his mother was at work.

Customs find 'rare' cargo

AN illegal haul of animal carcasses was discovered during a swoop by Customs officials on a Slovenian ship berthed in Edinburgh. Stuffed alligators, a salamander and a turtle shell were found by officers who were expecting to find an illicit cargo of cannabis.

Blunkett promises more funds for education action zones

By Ben Russell
Education Correspondent

THE Secretary of State for Education, David Blunkett, pledged extra funding for the Government's first education action zones yesterday.

He said each of the first 25 zones would receive £750,000 public funding, which would be topped up with £250,000 private sponsorship.

The first 12 zones will start operating in September – an increase on the 10 lots originally planned the rest coming into next January.

Each zone will bring together 10 to 20 schools under a special administration able to change teachers' contracts and tear up parts of the national curriculum. Ministers are considering 60 bids for the zones and are expected to announce the first wave next month.

Mr Blunkett made the announcement at a local election campaign press conference. He launched a leaflet outlining 30 Labour achievements since the gener-

higher standards, delivering lifelong learning." Mr Blunkett said he hoped the zones would produce innovations which could be used elsewhere.

"Within the 60 bids are many examples of exciting and innovative partnerships between the public and private sectors and I am confident we have many strong candidates," Mr Blunkett said.

He said more zones would be considered after the result of the Government's comprehensive spending review, due

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Netanyahu retraces Auschwitz journey

OSWIECIM, Poland (AP) — The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu led 7,000 Jews from around the world yesterday in retracing the two-mile journey from the former Nazi death camp, Auschwitz, to the gas chambers at Birkenau.

The "March of the Living" has for 10 years honoured the flourishing of Jewish identity over the Nazi attempt to annihilate it through the murders of 6 million Jews. This year the march has renewed significance with the 50th anniversary of Israel's founding.

Mr Netanyahu, the first Israeli leader to join the march, 6,000 Jewish youths and 1,000 Holocaust survivors that Israel's creation has ensured the survival of Jews.

In Israel, sirens brought the country to a halt for two minutes at 10am in tribute to those who died.



Benjamin Netanyahu at Auschwitz yesterday Photograph: AP



Or Yakoel, 9, placing paper butterflies outside Chabad Academy in South Carolina, yesterday to mark Holocaust remembrance Photograph: AP

Outrage at escape of paedophile

By Katherine Butler
in Belgium

BELGIUM'S justice and interior ministers resigned last night after the sensational escape and recapture several hours later of one of Europe's most dangerous criminals.

A wave of horror washed over Belgium, Luxembourg and northern France as the news broke that paedophile Marc Dutroux, awaiting trial for the abduction, abuse and murder of at least four young girls, had slipped through the fingers of the Belgian gendarmerie.

Johan Van de Lanotte, the Interior Minister, and Stefan De Clerck, Justice Minister, handed in their resignations after urgent consultations with Prime Minister Jean Luc Dehaene. The apparent case with which Dutroux got away provoked a fresh round of speculation about possible police or political complicity in the scandal.

Dutroux, in prison and under 24-hour surveillance since his arrest in August 1996, was at the courthouse at Neufchâteau in southern Belgium where he had been taken for interrogation when he made his extraordinary getaway. In farcical scenes, the heavily guarded prisoner overpowered two policemen, grabbed an overloaded gun, ran out the front door of the building and hi-

jacked a motorist. He headed for the Luxembourg motorway at high speed.

Police and the armed forces in all three countries moved quickly to seal the borders and search all vehicles but Dutroux managed to elude them by hijacking a series of cars. In an atmosphere of mounting crisis, national radio abandoned normal programming to call on listeners to help in the search.

Last night Dutroux was back in prison after four hours, having been tracked down in the Ardennes Forest, near the village of Saint-Medard, with the aid of army helicopters.

Julien Pierre, Dutroux's lawyer, said he had noticed a lapse in security over recent weeks while Gino Russo, father of Melissa, one of Dutroux's eight-year-old victims, accused the police of complicity.

Vincent De Gilly, an Opposition MP who took part in a parliamentary investigation into the handling of the Dutroux inquiry earlier this year, called the development "surreal, unimaginable and scandalous".

The inquiry concluded that the police and judiciary were "dysfunctional" and that Dutroux had taken advantage of their incompetence. The inquiry ruled any suggestion of high level protection or involvement in a paedophile ring.

Lebed looking for star appeal

By Phil Reeves
in Moscow

IT IS one of the more unlikely double acts to grace the political stage. The players Alain Delon, the French film star with the celebrated hair, and Alexander Lebed, the Russian ex-paratrooper general with the celebrated voice. The scene: western Siberia, naturally.

Mr Delon, star of *Zorro*, yesterday arrived in Krasnoyarsk to support the gravel-voiced Mr Lebed's bid to become governor of the vast region. The election, scheduled for Sunday, could prove decisive in Russia's future. If Mr Lebed, the former secretary of Russia's Security Council, wins, he would be well placed to pursue his plans to run for the presidency in 2000. If he loses, his chances of attracting the financial support to mount a powerful media campaign would shrivel.

Until recently, the polls suggested that the ex-general was in trouble, and that he would be trounced by the

posters, and dispensing promises that the place will truly become the centre of Russia if he gets into the Kremlin. How much he will gain from the appearance on the scene of a French movie actor — star of scores of films from the 1960s onwards — remains to be seen. The two met when the latter was in Paris last year.

Russia's parliament will today decide whether to throw itself on its sword in a fit of pique over Boris Yeltsin's audacious choice of prime minister, or swallow its pride, accept his nomination, and soldier on.

Crunch time has arrived for the State Duma, the lower house, which will vote for the third and final time over whether to accept as premier the little-known Sergei Kiriyenko, 35.

The outcome is critical. If the 450-member chamber repeats its last two votes on the issue, and again refuses the nomination, it will be dissolved. Boris Yeltsin would rule Russia by presidential decree until a new Duma is elected.

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(Refer to house decision maker.)



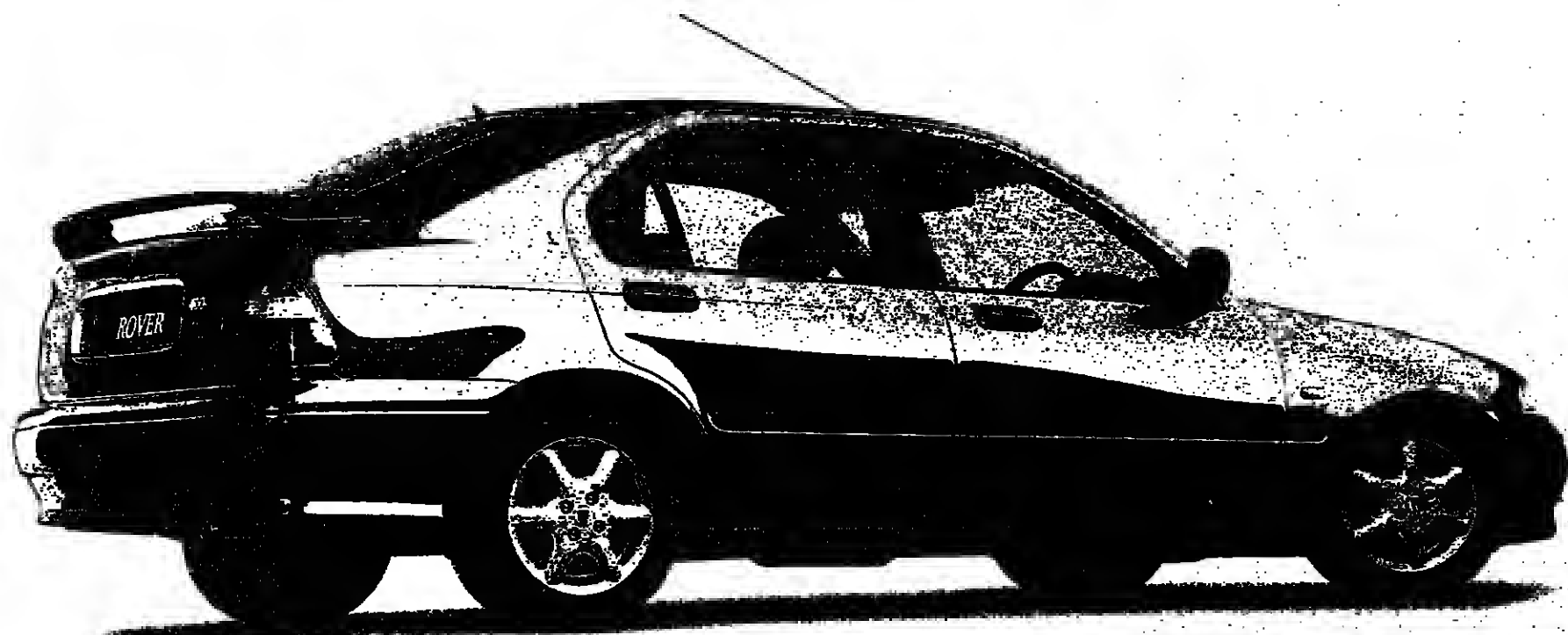
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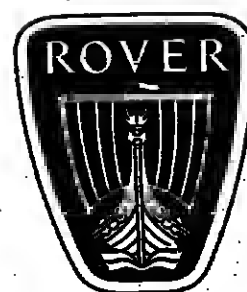


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Deep divide: Ethnic Albanians silently demonstrating in Pristina, capital of Kosovo, yesterday to protest for the 14th day against the rule of Belgrade. Serbia's referendum began yesterday over whether international help should be sought in the troubled republic. Photograph: Georgi Likovski

France denies Karadzic tip-off

By John Lichtfield
in Paris
Mary Dejevsky
in Washington

THE French Defence Ministry "categorically" denied a report that an officer serving with international peace-keeping forces in Bosnia thwarted a United States plan to capture the former Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, by tipping him off in advance. But it admitted it had redeployed the officer after he had formed a "dubious" relationship with Mr Karadzic, who is wanted for war crimes.

The ministry was responding to an article in yesterday's *Washington Post* which claimed the US and allied military forces in Bosnia had to abandon plans to arrest Mr Karadzic after discovering a French officer, named as Major Hervé Gourmillon, had held secret meetings with him. The article quoted a senior US official as saying the discovery forced Nato to suspend an operation involving hundreds of heavily armed soldiers and "ripped open a big gap in relations with the French" in Bosnia.

The French defence ministry said the officer had had "a number of contacts" with Serb leaders "as his orders permitted". In carefully chosen words, it continued: "As soon as the na-

ture of these contacts might have been construed as dubious, this officer was immediately given a new posting in France." The ministry refused to elaborate, but said it was confident that the officer had done nothing to impede Mr Karadzic's arrest. It "categorically rejected all allegations which cast doubt on the behaviour of all French soldiers in Bosnia".

The American view is that, whatever their purpose, the meetings violated Nato's policy of eschewing all official contact with indicted war criminals, especially Mr Karadzic, who is held responsible for permitting, if not ordering, some of the most heinous acts of the Bosnian war.

Last December, Louise Arbour, the chief prosecutor at the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, alleged that the French-controlled sector of Bosnia, covering the headquarters of Mr Karadzic in Pale, had become a haven for indicted war criminals. She accused the French authorities of impeding international efforts to arrest Mr Karadzic and others. French newspapers at the time carried reports suggesting there was great sympathy for the Bosnian Serbs among a section of French military officers.

The *Washington Post* article supplied detail about the pro-

posed Nato operation to attack the headquarters of Mr Karadzic's security forces in Pale. The article quoted US diplomats as saying they were "quite close" to carrying it out. Another official was quoted as saying he found the episode "despicable" and said "no trust remains" between US and French military forces.

The failure of the allied forces in Bosnia to capture indicted war criminals, including Radovan Karadzic, has provoked widespread criticism in the US and elsewhere, and a range of explanations has been offered. Some cite the difficulty of tracking the individuals concerned, others say it is the reluctance of the Pentagon to mount potentially risky operations before Congress approves an extension to the US troop mandate for Bosnia after June this year.

According to the *Washington Post*, however, the CIA knows the whereabouts of most of the indicted war criminals, and the French are indeed alone in not having attempted a single capture within their zone.

The difficulties recounted in the article are typical of the strategic and operational misunderstandings that seem to crop up regularly when Americans and French are required to co-operate internationally.

Middle East 'on brink' of military flare-up

By Rupert Cornwell

TEN days before the vital London summit between Benjamin Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat, a leading security policy think-tank warned that unless the US used its influence to pull the peace process back from the brink, warfare could break out anew in the Middle East.

In a sharp critique of Washington's policies (and not only in the Middle East), the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) declared that the extreme patience thus far displayed by the US in its role of mediator between Israelis and Arabs was turning from virtue into vice. Unless it acted now, the peace process could collapse completely, leading to a renewed Palestinian uprising, led "certainly by more extreme

Islamic elements, perhaps by the PLO itself".

But the fraught situation in the Middle East is only one worry voiced by the IISS annual Strategic Survey. From the Balkans to the Gulf and to financially troubled Asia, its message is the same: In the crunch, almost everything depends on American leadership, and all too often, that leadership is found wanting. The US was the dominant world power. But, John Chipman, the IISS director, said: "It is often late into crisis management and oscillates unpredictably between unilateral and multilateral approaches to international problems."

Moreover, "globalisation," by spreading crises faster, had only made matters worse. Even if it committed itself fully, Washington could not be certain of

solving every problem — "but unless the US chooses to frame a policy, it is unlikely that any answers will be found".

The assessment heightens the urgency attending the Israeli-Arab summit promoted by Tony Blair next month. But the same anxiety pervades efforts to attain a durable settlement in Bosnia, where prospects had improved in late 1997 and early 1998. But without peace in Kosovo there could be no stability in the region.

However, the review strikes some less gloomy notes. For the first time in years, the case for abolishing nuclear weapons had entered the mainstream of arms control debate. The Institute also commends Nato for "work well done" in the diplomatic management of enlargement of the Alliance.

Karamanlis dies, aged 91

FLAGS flew at half-mast and newspapers appeared in black-rimmed special editions as Greece yesterday mourned the death of Constantine Karamanlis who served as Prime Minister from 1955 to 1963 and then from 1974 to 1980, when he returned from exile in Paris to take charge of the transition from military dictatorship to a democracy that would enter the then European Community in 1981, writes Rupert Cornwell. A family funeral will be held today, before he is buried in the suburbs of Athens. His supreme achievement was to haul Greece from the Levant into modern Western Europe. The EU is now the cornerstone of Greek foreign policy and though the country failed to qualify for first round membership of the Euro, it is on course to join the single currency in 2001.

Dockers win jobs court battle

AUSTRALIAN trade unionists are celebrating a major victory after a court ordered that 1,400 union dock workers sacked two weeks ago should be reinstated, writes Sam Jary. Judges at Melbourne Federal Court dismissed an appeal by Patrick Stevedores, the company which fired the workers, against an order on Tuesday that they rehire everyone they had fired. The company had claimed that its employees, all members of the Maritime Union of Australia, were inefficient and overpaid.

James Earl Ray dies, aged 70

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — James Earl Ray, the petty criminal who confessed to assassinating Martin Luther King, then recanted and spent decades seeking a trial, died yesterday, state officials said. He was 70.

By pleading guilty in March 1969 to the shooting a year before, Ray avoided the possibility of a conviction at trial and a death sentence. He then argued for years that he was coerced into making the plea.

His attempt to get a trial drew an unlikely coalition that included his family as well as King's family, who believe King was the victim of a murder conspiracy, not a lone gunman. Shortly after Ray pleaded guilty, Coretta Scott King, the civil rights leader's widow, said there had been "many fingers which helped pull the trigger".

More recently, arguing for a trial, she said: "Even if no new light is shed on the facts concerning my husband's assassination, at least we and the nation can have the satisfaction of knowing that justice has run its course in this tragedy."

The Rev Joseph Lowery, a co-founder of King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said he never believed Ray was smart enough to plan the assassination alone.

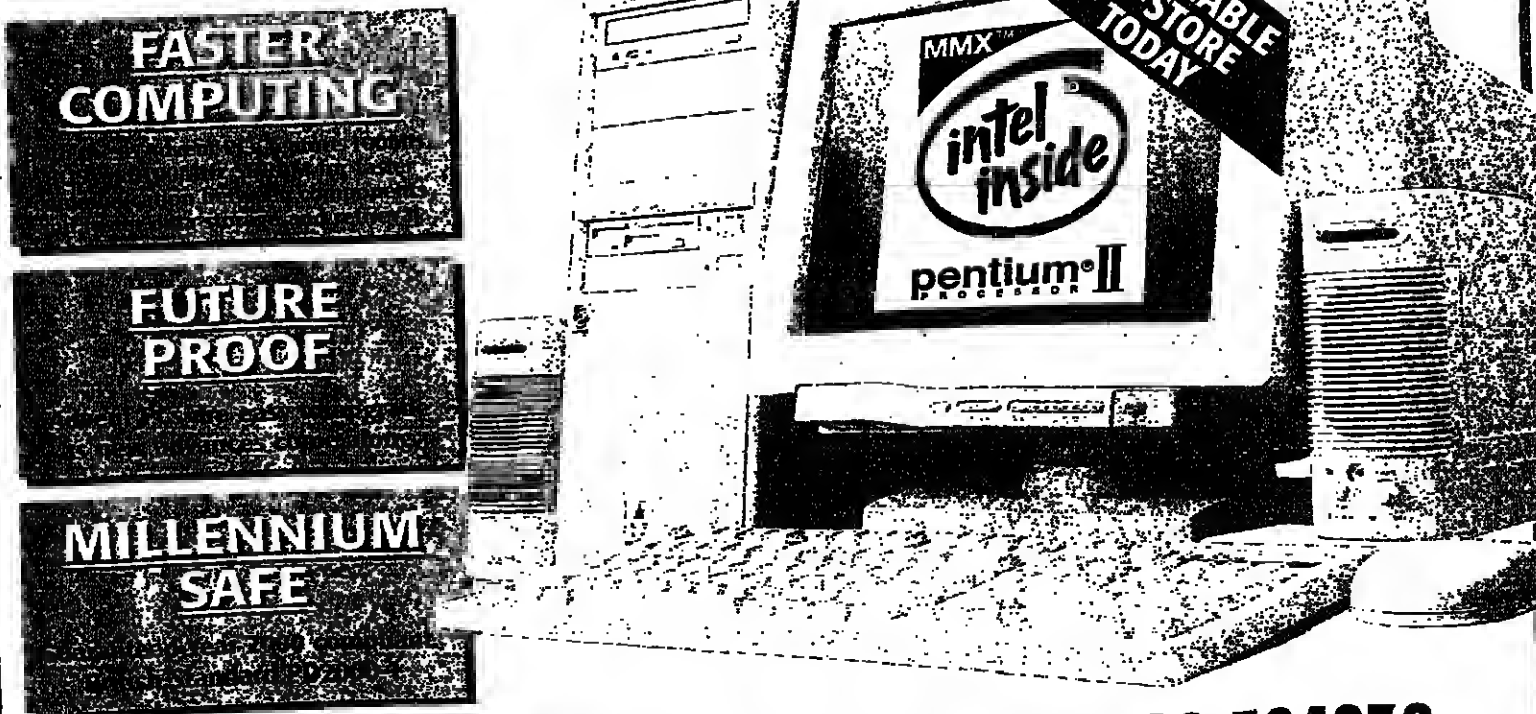
Prosecutors cited the evidence against Ray and noted courts had repeatedly rejected the guilty plea.

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Japan's raw new recruits ruffle corporate calm

By Richard Lloyd Parry
in Tokyo

EVERY SPRING, as the famous cherry blossoms bloom across Japan, the country's offices, bars and subway trains are marked by another distinctive seasonal phenomenon. You can spot them at once, with their shiny new clothes, nervously clutched briefcases and air of uneasy anticipation. They are the new company entrants, the latest generation of salarymen and "office ladies", and they are as familiar here as a species of bird.

For several weeks, the new arrivals go through training programmes designed to mould them into useful corporate servants and smooth the rough edges acquired at university. There are company songs and mottoes to be mastered, a homily from the company president and a solemn entrance ceremony in which the "freshmen" (with fewer freshwomen) are baptised as full members of the corporate family.

This year, things are not as they should be. The Japanese media, alert for juvenile mis-

behaviour after a series of grisly crimes by teenagers and children, have identified a worrying trend: something is wrong with this year's recruits.

The problem is described in the latest copy of the current affairs magazine *Aera*. In appalled tones, interviewees tell horror stories. There are familiar stories of new recruits turning up with ear-rings or dyed hair. There was the entrance ceremony whose cathedral-like solemnity was interrupted by the trilling of a mobile phone. Instead of switching it off, the hapless freshman pulled it out and engaged in a loud conversation.

More telling are violations of Japanese traditions of respect. *Kigo* is an extra-polite mode of speech in which the forms of words change depending whether one is addressing a superior, an inferior or an equal. Staff greet and take their leave of one another with another set of formulaic polite expressions. But many young Japanese are at a loss with such formality.

"Company managers are always complaining that the freshmen can't even say hello to one

another properly," said Akemi Yoshida, who trains new recruits in corporate good manners. "You call out the register at the beginning of the class, and they just say, 'Yeah,' or 'You what?'"

The culture clash is not surprising, for no country has a generation gap bigger than that of Japan. Someone of 90 grew up in a country which just a generation earlier had been a feudal state. Sixty-year-olds remember the destruction of the war, and the poverty and malnutrition of the post-war years. To the young, such memories are utterly alien - until the present economic slow-down they had known nothing but prosperity, and even now they enjoy the wealth and security of the world's second largest economy. No wonder there are misunderstandings.

"Freshmen used to be like pandas - very quiet, shy, always nervous," said Sakio Sakagawa, a 71-year-old management consultant. "This year they are like recycled paper - time consuming to transform and full of impurities. When you use strong stuff on them like bleach, they just fall apart."

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Hand of welcome: Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi President, standing atop a car to greet his followers in front of the holy shrine of Imam Ali, in the town of Najaf, 180km (110 miles) south of Baghdad, during a visit to the shrine last month. Photograph: AP

Iranians visit Iraq's holy places

By Patrick Corbett
in Kerbala

THE Iranian pilgrim visiting the golden-domed Muslim shrine of al-Abbas in the Iraqi holy city of Kerbala just west of the Euphrates was visibly on edge. He did not want to give his name. He started to say he came from the city of Kermanshah in Iran, and then seemed to change his mind, saying: "Just write that I am a Muslim."

His nervousness is understandable. In the past six months pilgrims from Iran have started to visit shrines in Iraq holy to the Shia tradition in Islam, to which most Iranians belong.

It is the first time they have come in large numbers since the eight-year war between the two countries in which half a million Iranian and Iraqi soldiers were killed, started in 1980.

The pilgrims were sitting in the lobby of the al-Yassini hotel in central Kerbala quietly drinking tea. Outside their bus waited with a sign on its windshield saying in Arabic: "Iranian religious delegation." None of the 62-strong party looked well-off. The men were dressed in crumpled and travel-stained black suits and the women clutched bundles of belongings. One man said: "I am a photographer and deal in videos. It was easy to get here."

This is not quite true, Iraq says its borders are open for Iranian religious tourists, but Iran is wary of giving easy access to Iraq. The pilgrims in the al-Yassini had entered through Syria after first flying to Damascus. They had driven through the desert to reach the cities of Kufa, Najaf and Kerbala, where the Shia Muslim martyrs are buried in mosques with golden domes and minarets.

The Iranians would not have seen any signs of the Shia uprising in all three cities in March 1991. In Kerbala, Iraq later said 3,000 people were killed. In each case the shrines were the last stronghold of the rebels, whom Iraq accused of being aided by Iran. In Kerbala, the shrine and its outer walls were hit by bullets and rocket-propelled grenades. In the immediate aftermath of the fighting the entrance to the al-Abbas shrine was guarded by a British-made Chieftain tank, which Iraq had captured from Iran during the war. Today there are no signs of the fighting.

Not all the foreign pilgrims in Najaf and Kerbala are Iranian. A short distance from the al-Yassini hotel a red bus from Dagestan in southern Russia had drawn up. Ahmed Zein al-Abideen, a religious teacher who had learnt Arabic to read the Koran, and 12 other Dagestanis were on the final stage of a pilgrimage to Mecca, during which he had already driven 4,500km (2,780 miles). With some pride he said: "It took us 10 days to get there. We decided to see Kerbala on the way back." He had found it easier to travel than the Iranians.

Impressive in both cases was the immense distances and difficulties overcome by the pilgrims to reach the shrines in Iraq. Iranian wariness in allowing its own citizens to flood across the border - only four hours away by the most direct route - may spring from a desire not to get too close to Iraq too quickly. Iraq, on the contrary, wants to improve relations with Tehran, with whom it shares an 800-mile border. It is nervous of the slight signs of rapprochement between Iran and the United States. In February, Iran was reported to have clamped down on Iraqi oil smuggling on barges travelling from southern Iraq through Iranian territorial waters to Dubai. It also supplies with ammunition the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, one of the Kurdish factions in northern Iraq.

"Iran is the key country in the region for the moment," said a diplomat in Baghdad. "The policy of all of Iraq's other neighbours is set and not likely to change. But with a new government in Tehran its policy is more fluid." If the Iranians shift towards the Americans it will further isolate Iraq.

There are some signs of improving relations between Tehran and Baghdad. There has just been a substantial exchange of prisoners of war, some of whom had been imprisoned since 1980. At the same time, Iraq still hosts the Mojahedin-e-Khalq, the Iranian guerrilla group, whose headquarters are in central Baghdad.

The Iranian pilgrims in Kerbala are right to be circumspect. The Iran-Iraq war was one of the most savage fought anywhere since 1945. An Iraqi observer in Baghdad said: "It will take a hundred years for the legacy of hatred to die away."

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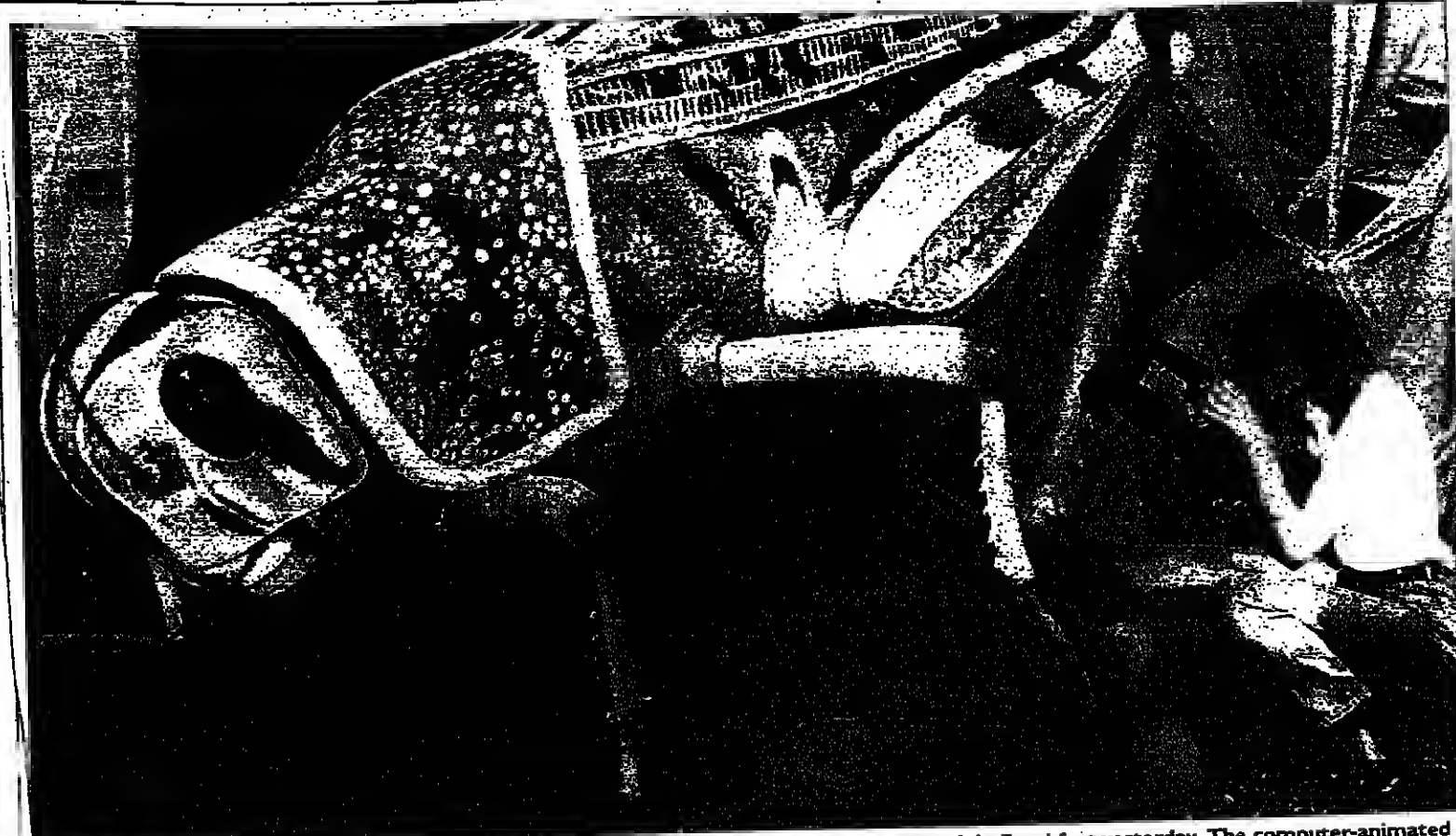
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During machine: A camerawoman filming an oversize model of a locust at Palmengarten park in Frankfurt yesterday. The computer-animated insect is part of an exhibition called "Insects - the secret rulers" that runs until 16 August
Photograph: Bernd Kammerer/AP

CIA seeks young spies on Internet

By Mary Dejevsky
in Washington

IT IS NOT only the United States' big tobacco companies that are out to "catch 'em young". The Central Intelligence Agency is at it too, launching an Internet web site - CIA Home Page for Kids - to introduce the world's biggest spy agency to a generation of multi-sceptics brought up in the tranquillity of the post Cold-War world.

Call up www.odci.gov/cia/ciakids, and you find a multi-coloured image of domestic bliss in spydom: mummy, daddy, and the dog, kitted out more like *The Avengers* cast than 007, who invite the young and curious to click on briefcases and medallions for an induction into the mysteries of espionage. CIA-style.

Fancy yourself as a 21st-century Bond? Your role model is



Well-dressed spook: The role model on the CIA web site

not male trench-coated anonymity behind dark glasses, but a slim, smiling black woman, in a white shirt and dark suit, clearly out to run the world.

For the hands-on types, there is a catalogue of outdated spy equipment, including micro-cameras, a tyre spike - "effective in harassing modern-day enemies" - and the fearsome

sounding "belly buster hand-crank audio drill" dating from the late Fifties, described thus: "The base of the drill was held firmly against the stomach while the handle was cranked manually. This kit came with several drill bits and accessories."

When it comes to knowing your enemy, though, young would-be Bonds may need a more reliable source than the CIA. Take the United Kingdom country profile. The UK, the CIA tells us, is situated "between the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea, north-west of France" - so far, so good. If vague. We occupy an area "slightly smaller than Oregon".

And we gained our "independence" almost a century later than the US, on 1 January 1801 (when, as the CIA clarifies, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was established).

'Titanic' sails through barrier on foreign films

TITANIC has become Peking's biggest grossing film in the two weeks since it opened, with box office takings in the city already topping 16m yuan (£1.2m) and expected to reach 20m yuan by the end of the run this Sunday, double the previous record.

China remains nervous of allowing foreign films into the market, for commercial and political reasons. So approval from no less a figure than President Jiang Zemin gave the green light for massive media coverage. "You should not imagine there is no ideological education in capitalist countries. *Titanic* speaks of wealth and love, the relationship between rich and poor, and vividly describes how people react to disaster. I told my comrades in the Politburo to see this film," Mr Jiang said.

In search of a local angle, the *Peking Youth Daily* revealed that six Chinese passengers, probably students travelling third class, drowned when the ship sank in 1912. However, the main draw for audiences was the chance to see an epic film the like of which cannot be made in China.

But Peking has ambitions. Yang Buting, deputy director of China's Film Bureau, said £2m has been invested by China in developing special technology. "Technically speaking, China will then have no problems in making movies like *Titanic*," Mr Jiang was said to be very impressed on hearing about the film's massive global profits.

THIS is National Traffic Safety Week, and China is marking a world record it would rather not hold. The country ranks first for traffic-related deaths, which last year reached 73,861. This is quite an achievement, given the proportionately low number of vehicles on the roads. The *People's Daily* - a couple of years ago bemoaned the fact that China had only 2 per cent of the world's vehicles, but 14 per cent of the world's vehicle accident deaths.

This week's campaign does not pull its punches. A collection of 500 photographs of horrific accidents, including mangled human bodies, has been assembled "to emphasise the value of life". In Peking, which

PEKING DIARY



Teresa Poole

suffers from 1.2 million vehicles, some 270 publicity stands featuring this gore have been set up at major intersections in an attempt to educate people about the dangers of drink-driving and jumping red lights.

The sad fact is that even these shock tactics are unlikely to have any effect on the country's lunatic drivers. The only hope is that if the number of vehicles continues to increase, China's traffic will grind to a permanent gridlocked halt.

CHINA'S flagship of communist retail therapy, Peking's much-maligned Friendship Store, has closed its doors for refurbishment. This symbol of Old China is having a facelift.

There was a time when the state-owned emporium was the only shop in Peking selling imported goods. In the bad old days, Chinese people were not allowed in and goods could only be purchased with Foreign Exchange Certificates, the rip-off currency available to foreigners, or dollars. Then it metamorphosed into a normal Chinese shopping venue, albeit a shabby one. But Chinese and foreigners flocked instead to the gleaming new shopping malls.

So Pekingers, and the city's expatriates, are now waiting to see what will emerge when the store reopens next month. But the big question is whether the legions of shop assistants are also having a behavioural makeover.

Three years ago, every sales assistant was provided with a copy of the "Fifty Taboos", a list of banned expressions for government service staff. This included such retorts as "Ask someone else!", "Didn't you hear? What are your ears for?", "For hell's sake, do you want it?"

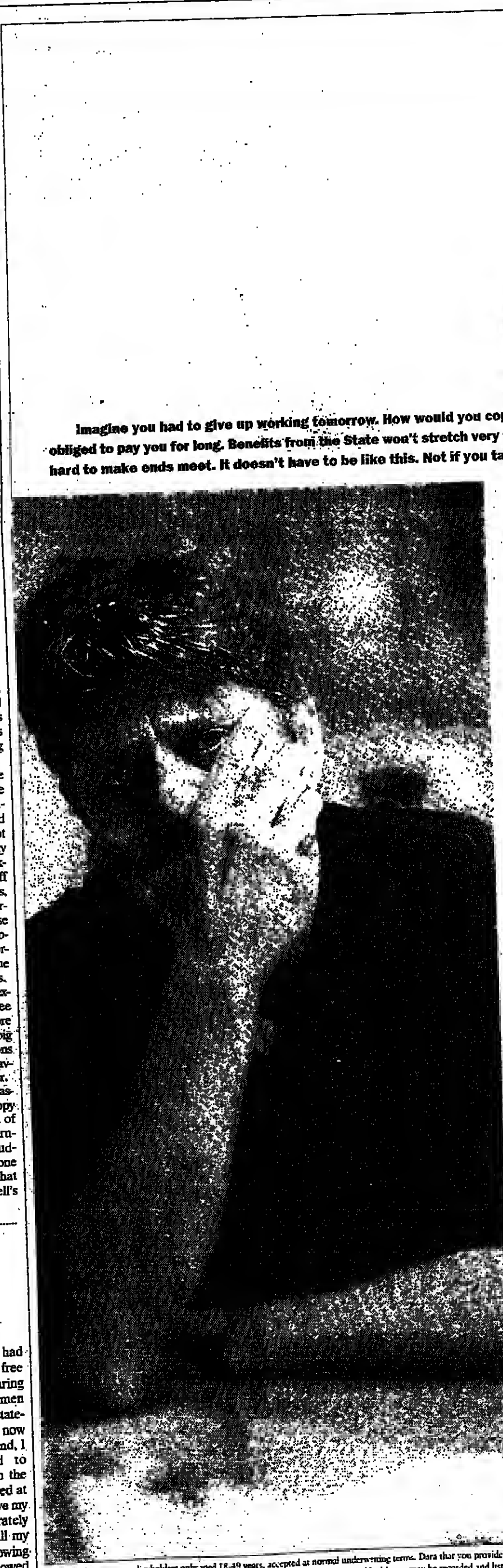
Wang laments the pain of exile

THE Chinese dissident, Wang Dan, who was released from prison last week and flown to the United States, emerged from seclusion yesterday to express pleasure that he was free, but unhappiness about being fired into exile, writes Mary Dejevsky in Washington.

He was speaking at a press conference in New York, two days after being discharged from a Detroit hospital where he had undergone intensive medical tests.

Yesterday, Mr Wang, 29,

who as a student firebrand had issued passionate calls for free speech and democracy during the 1989 protest in Tiananmen Square, said in a prepared statement: "My feelings right now are mixed. On the one hand, I am naturally delighted to breathe free again... On the other hand, I feel disturbed at having been forced to leave my own country, to live separately from my family... and all my compatriots, without knowing when, if ever, I will be allowed to see them again."



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Think carefully before you turn the page. You may believe that a heart attack is the sort of thing that happens to someone else. But if you do, bear in mind that last year Norwich Union Healthcare paid out £22 million in income protection claims. That's rather a lot of 'someone else's'.

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A promise of paradise broken

A Welsh couple's idyllic Antiguan retreat has been shattered by violence and legal battles, writes Phil Davison

FOR 33 years Taffy and Bonnie Bufton lived alone on the little Caribbean island of Guiana, far from their native Wales, and without running water, phone or electricity, but with the company of their beloved fallow deer, Dorset horn sheep, tropical mocking birds and other rare species.

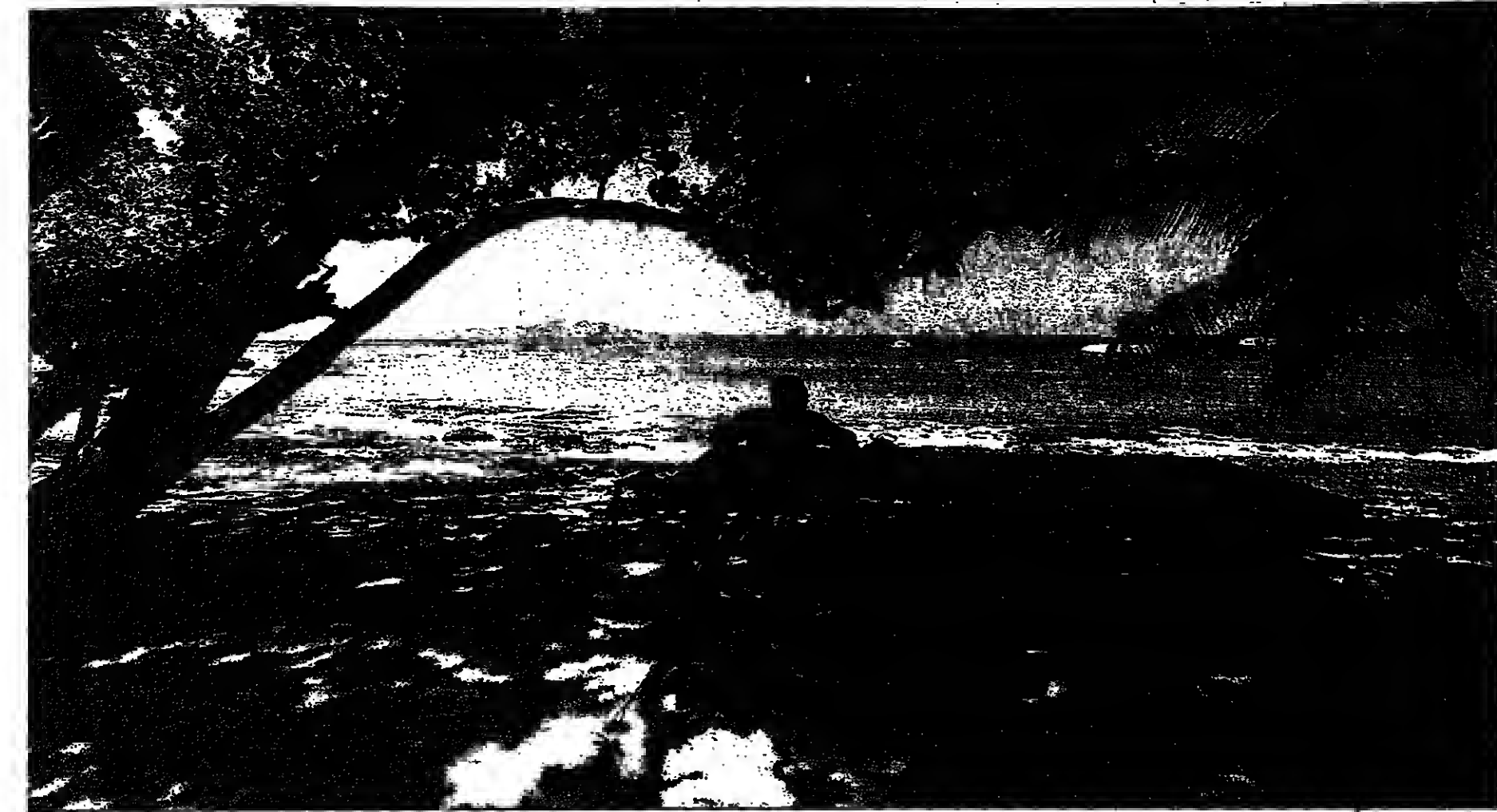
On Friday, the island's tranquillity will end when bulldozers prepare the ground for a projected glitzy \$600million Malaysian-financed tourism project of 2,000 hotel rooms, upmarket villas, golf courses, spa, water theme park and the Caribbean's biggest casino. Worse still for the Buftons and other nature lovers, Taffy, 74, faces the rest of his life in a Caribbean jail for attempted murder.

After the government of Antigua and Barbuda, to which Guiana Island belongs, ordered the Buftons' eviction last year, a seething Taffy took his rusty .38 Smith and Wesson, stormed into his lawyer's office in Antigua's rickety capital, St. John's, and allegedly shot the attorney, Vere Bird Junior, in the face. If you recognise the latter name, you're right. Mr Bird Junior is not only the son of long-time Antiguan Prime Minister V.C. Bird, but he is also a member of parliament, chairman of the ruling party and brother of the current premier, Lester Bird. Some of the Birds are not the sort of folks it is wise to threaten, which Taffy Bufton admits he did.

Vere Jr, not Lester, may have run for Prime Minister but for a small incident in 1989. An Israeli-made Uzi submachine gun, fired by a Medellín drug cartel hitman, that killed Colombian presidential candidate Luis Galán in Bogotá, was traced to a consignment ordered by an Antiguan military training school linked to Vere Jr. A Royal Commission of Inquiry named him, but dropped the case for fear of chaos in Antigua.

Vere Jr, 62, is known to Antiguanas as "Runway" because, as head of the national parks authority, he was in charge of resurfacing the runway at V.C. Bird airport - named after his father - when millions of dollars went missing during the work. His younger brother Ivor, in his early fifties, was convicted of smuggling 12 kilos of cocaine into Antigua several years ago. He walked free with a \$200,000 fine.

It was December 16 last year, Taffy, a portly, cheery-faced man with the palest of skin, had been listening to a local parliamentary broadcast in which his lawyer had promised to fight his eviction. Instead,



Paradise lost: Not every tropical haven is the tranquil hideaway it appears to be as Taffy Bufton (below) was to discover

Photograph: David Ashdown

Vere Jr hacked a hill, formally named the Cyril Thomas Bufton and Lona Eileen Bufton (Resettlement and Maintenance) Act 1987, which ordered their immediate eviction and offered them a two-bedroom home elsewhere, five acres of land and a monthly stipend of \$650 a month.

"I went over to his office with my pistol with the intention of frightening him," Taffy Bufton told me in the cluttered, but comfortable, seaside home they have been given during the dispute.

A bullet went through the Welshman's hand. A bullet, possibly the same one, also lodged in Vere Bird Jr's mouth but he has recovered with only lost teeth. "I could easily have killed him if I wanted. He was sitting behind his desk. I had sugar very badly (diabetes). I had a blackout. I remember wrestling with him. He had hold of my hand, trying to get the pistol from me. Then there was a bang and a searing pain."

After their September eviction order, the couple had demanded \$2 million, plus a new home with five acres and a stipend. The government re-

sponded with a verbal offer of \$500,000, but no such figure was mentioned in the parliamentary bill.

They had agreed one of them would always stay on Guiana Island to avoid a forced eviction. "But after the shooting, the radio announced that I was a crackshot and heavily armed," 72-year-old Bonnie told me as she showed me snapshots of their island home, their deer and their Mars bar-loving pet ram. "They came to me saying Taffy had tried to commit suicide and shouting 'where are the guns?' It was a trick to get me off the island. I'm kicking myself for my stupidity," she said.

They have not been allowed back since. Their furniture, ransacked and badly damaged by police looking for weapons, was dumped unceremoniously in the garage of their temporary home.

"They destroyed a lifetime of possessions. Look at this knitting bag. They ripped it apart," said Bonnie. Since Taffy left hospital last September, they have been confined to a temporary home on Willoughby Bay in the south of Antigua on a plot of around \$12,000 paid by supporters. "At first, we had

police officers here 24 hours. They even slept in one of our bedrooms. They said it was for our protection in case anyone assassinated us," said Taffy. The police recently moved out but ordered them not to leave the country. They have all but given up on the \$500,000 dollars

"I went over to Bird's office with my pistol to frighten him. I could easily have killed him if I'd wanted to."

and now would like nothing more than to see Taffy cleared. "We'd like to go to the Isle of Man," he said. Taffy faces a hearing next month. Meanwhile, their animals are suffering. "Most of the deer are dead already," Taffy went on. Some will have died naturally. But I've heard people have been going over there shooting them."

It is a bizarre story which has split the islanders between sup-

porters of the tourism project, notably the government, and environmentalists and sympathisers of the elderly Welsh couple.

More than 8,000 people, about 12 percent of the population of Antigua, took to the streets to protest the develop-



ment. To some, who despise the Bird family, Taffy and Bonnie are something of local heroes. They hear cheers or shouts of "Bufty" when they are allowed to leave their virtual house arrest for weekly hospital treatment for his shattered hand. It's an extraordinary finale to the Buftons' story which began when the couple from Brecon in mid-Wales, answered a 1965 ad in the *Times* for care-

takers to run the 447-acre island, only 80 yards from the north coast of Antigua and linked by a hand-hauled pontoon of wooden planks and oil drums big enough to carry the caretakers' 1950s Morris Minor van.

The Buftons were employed by Guiana Farms Limited, a company owned by London lawyer Alexander Hamilton-Hill, who visited the island only once a year.

Once Mr Hamilton-Hill and his wife died, two Antiguan brothers, John and Jimmy Fuller, came forward to claim to have bought the shares to Guiana Farms Limited from Hamilton-Hill's. They claim that makes them the owners of the island and are demanding the Antiguan government buy it from them before selling it to Malaysian entrepreneur Dato Tan Kay Hock, the man behind the projected Guiana Island development.

The Buftons say the Fuller transaction was illegal, staged by the Hamilton-Hill family to avoid inheritance tax on the island, valued by experts at anywhere between 20 million and 100 million US dollars.

Until last year, it looked as though the Buftons would sur-

vive all the disputes through their claim to squatters' rights. Then, in February last year, along came the Malaysian, Mr Tan, with a plan to build an "Asian Village" on Guiana Island and an adjacent plot on Antigua proper, as well as attract rock superstars by building a recording studio to replace George Martin's renowned Air Studios on the nearby island of Montserrat, now covered in ash from the Soufriere volcano. "This exotic resort will feature a unique showcase of the colourful cultures of Bali, Penang, Malacca, Phuket and the Mediterranean, combined with the vibrant lifestyle of the Caribbean," say the brochures.

Even though ownership of Guiana remained in dispute, Mr Bird's government signed the agreement with the developers and it was passed into law despite protests from the opposition. United Progressive Party (UPP), which claims the agreement is unconstitutional. The party's claims have been rejected by local and regional courts, but it is now considering an appeal to the Privy Council, the final Supreme Court of Appeals for

Britain's former colonies. Like many Antiguanas, and the Buftons, the UPP is concerned not only that the Guiana Island wildlife will die off but are worried about Mr Tan and the terms of his deal with the government. Under the accord, the Malaysian will enjoy major tax breaks after paying a little less than \$6 million for Guiana Island and the adjacent area. Some local experts believe the island is worth closer to \$100 million and that Mr Tan could abandon development, particularly in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis, and re-sell it at a huge profit.

What's more, the terms of the agreement clearly drafted by Mr Tan's side, granting the development company tax and duty-free status, the right to repatriate its profits, tax exemption for the casino and ban on other casinos within a six-mile radius of the development, sound more like the kind of conditions imposed by victors over their vanquished. "It virtually sets up a state within a state," said Winston Derrick, editor of the local *Daily Observer*. "Plus, the company behind the project, Asian Village Antigua Limited, is an offshore company registered in Tortola (in the British Virgin Islands). Nobody knows who the hell this company is."

The government "is selling its most sensitive ecological area, its most scenic spot left, not even for a string of beads, but for low-paying jobs, where a Malaysian will exploit Antiguan labour," said Tim Hector, editor of the opposition newspaper *Outlet*. "Our national patrimony is being alienated and becoming an 'Asian Village', a settler colony, as it was in the beginning."

Valerie Haydon, the sales and marketing manager for Asia Island Antigua Limited, insists the development project will be good for Antigua and that the Buftons were reasonably treated. "If anything had happened to them on that island, no-one would have noticed. I'm just sorry the way I turned out for them. I think they had been out in the sun too long," she said.

As for Vere Bird Jr, he sent the following letter to the man who allegedly shot him. "Bird and Bird would like to thank you for the pleasure of having been able to legally represent you over the past several years. However, we now inform you that this office will no longer be able to represent you."

The law firm also reminded their former client he had promised them half of any settlement obtained.

The giant steps to freedom from the Killing Fields

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is 50 years old and Clare Short tells Matthew Brace it's time to think again about the rights we need

DANA TEP knows more than most about human rights. Between 1975 and 1979 she was worked almost to death in the Killing Fields of Cambodia. She buried five members of her family in the mud of the rice paddies - three sons, her mother-in-law and her husband, all murdered by Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge. Her oldest son was beaten to death in front of her.

Dana was caught in a whirlwind of blood-letting during which the Khmer Rouge tried to rid Cambodia of its landowners, monarchists and intelligentsia by merciless killing. Even those who wore spectacles were considered enemies of the people.

She survived only by the strongest of wills and in the last days of the regime escaped on foot, ducking the bullets of her captors.

For a day she and her daughter outran the soldiers and finally came to the banks of a raging tropical river which was all that stood between them and freedom. She could not swim, but with her arms wrapped around her daughter's neck she crossed and was saved.

It is a dramatic story that Dana told with such courage at Amnesty International's annual general meeting earlier this month it prompted a standing ovation. Such tales

however are all too common and many recount events within the past 50 years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was created stating every individual's basic rights. Dana and her family were denied almost every one of the declaration's 30 articles during their detention. For her at that time it might as well never have been written.

The world hoped human rights abuses would wane after the declaration was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948. It was hailed as a response to the atrocities of the Second World War and a promise by governments to work towards a world without cruelty and injustice.

As a declaration it had no teeth, but it has spawned 25 legal instruments which form the backbone of modern human rights law around the world: two main covenants on civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights, a swathe of others including the European Convention on Human Rights and, more recently, several single issue conventions.

Judge Rosalyn Higgins, the British judge at the International Court of Justice in the Hague, believes the declaration changed the course of history by capturing people's imagination.

"It has had the most extraordinary impact on the international psyche," she said. "It was the first universal standard setting for human rights, an attempt to move the issue on to a much more global view, and of all the instruments we have had since it is still the most involved in front of legal bodies around the world, including domestic courts."

Judge Higgins added that many of the younger states, particularly those who gained independence in the early 1960s, took the declaration "lock, stock and bar-



Standing up: Clare Short (left) believes the experiences of Cambodian refugee Dana Tep (right) are a vital reminder to world leaders of ongoing human rights abuses



Photograph: NTI

rel and made it part of their national constitution. For many countries it is national law.

Clare Short, the Secretary of State for International Development and a long standing human rights advocate, will be upbeat about the declaration tomorrow when she celebrates its 50th anniversary at a Socialist International conference in Manila in the Philippines. "The first thing that strikes you, when you read it again, is what wonderful, wise political leadership the world was given in 1948," Ms Short told *The Independent* last week.

"The lead was to say each and every human being is entitled to a set of fundamental human rights and I think it is

stunning to think that the world was given that." However, she is aware of its shortcomings and will call on the 140 members of Socialist International, the worldwide body of socialist parties whose human rights committee she chairs, to judge all rights equally.

"[After the first few years of the declaration] there was a period of time when things, including human rights, got tangled up in the rhetoric of the Cold War," she said.

"The breadth of the universal declaration was rather lost... and was seen as being about just civil and political rights and not also about social and economic ones."

Ms Short sees rights to education,

work, a fair wage for a dignified living, health, and enjoyment of one's culture as having been given less prominence than the rights to freedom from torture and persecution and not to face the death penalty and she wants a redressing of the balance.

"We need to remind the whole world that the universal declaration includes those social and economic rights as well."

Despite the UN's hopes for the declaration and the amount that it has achieved in highlighting rights issues, human rights abuses did not go away, and in some countries they got considerably worse. Amnesty describes the declaration as one of the world's best kept secrets and says even if someone knows their rights, what use is it if their government flouts them?

"Half the world's governments still jail prisoners of conscience"; a third of those governments still favour torture as a means of suppression; and few governments have promoted the existence of the contents of the declaration," according to Pierre Sané, Amnesty's secretary general.

Amnesty are campaigning to encourage world leaders and citizens to publicly adhere to the declaration and all its articles in this 50th anniversary year in the hope that it will highlight "broken promises" that have allowed human rights abuses to continue despite the existence of an internationally recognised rights document.

"We want to do more than point the finger at governments who have fallen short of their promises," said Mr Sané.

"We want to show that there is a groundswell of popular support for the rights in the declaration, that the public will not stand by for another 50 years of broken promises."

The same denial of rights that ripped apart Dana Tep's life is being repeated to-

day in Algeria, Iraq and Nigeria, among other countries, where opposing the government can carry a death sentence. During the Pope's recent visit to Nigeria he called on the military regime run by General Sani Abacha to free 60 political prisoners, including some facing the death penalty, and asked for all Nigeria's 600 death row inmates to have their sentences commuted to life.

Observers will be surprised if Abacha even acknowledged the plea, let alone took any action on it.

And there are others countries which have failed to sign some human rights treaties and conventions that you would not expect to appear in an international rogues' gallery.

Britain has not ratified some of the UN and European conventions, including ones dealing with abolishing the death penalty and punishing those guilty of the crime of apartheid, although these are under review.

And despite US President Bill Clinton's refusal to include Nigeria in his recent whistle-stop African tour because of its human rights record, the United States is one of only two countries that has not ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the rights document which has had the highest backing of all. The US stands alone with Qatar although the tiny Middle East nation has agreed to ratify imminently.

Dana Tep says there is still a long way to go before human rights is implemented worldwide and she knows that position might never be reached, but at least the first seeds planted 50 years ago by the UN have grown.

"The Universal Declaration of Human Rights gives people something to believe in and something to fight for. I only wish more countries would read it and follow it. It might have saved my family."



هنا من العمل

Love and business are bad partners

Corporations can see profits tumble if the man at the top hits rock bottom at home, says Meg Carter

RUPERT MURDOCH sprung yet another surprise on an unsuspecting media earlier this week with the announcement that he and his wife, Anna, are to split after 31 years. The news shocked many in the media business and beyond. Within hours his private life was on the front pages and shares in his company, News Corporation, had started to fall - proof, if it were needed, that even the most powerful struggle to leave their personal problems at the boardroom door.

And the bigger and more dominant the personalities leading business, the more likely there is to be concern about what might happen should their influence - for whatever reason - decrease. In Mr and Mrs Murdoch's case, attention rests on her role within the company and the likely effect the split will have on her husband's desire to build a media dynasty. Their split is "painful" but "amicable", we are told. No-one else is involved. Mrs Murdoch is known to have been trying to get her 67-year-old husband to "slow down" for some years.

Divorce is thought unlikely. Which is just as well. Anna Murdoch is a board member of News Corporation, in which the Murdoch family is a major shareholder, as well as a director of a number of Murdoch-owned companies - positions she will continue to hold. Many have long spoken of Mrs Murdoch as a potential stop-gap chief executive of the company were her husband to die before any of their children were in a position - speculation subsequently used to account for this week's stock market jitters. "A knee-jerk reaction unlikely to cause a long-term psychological perception of impact," was one Sydney broker's excuse. For others, however, the issue is how

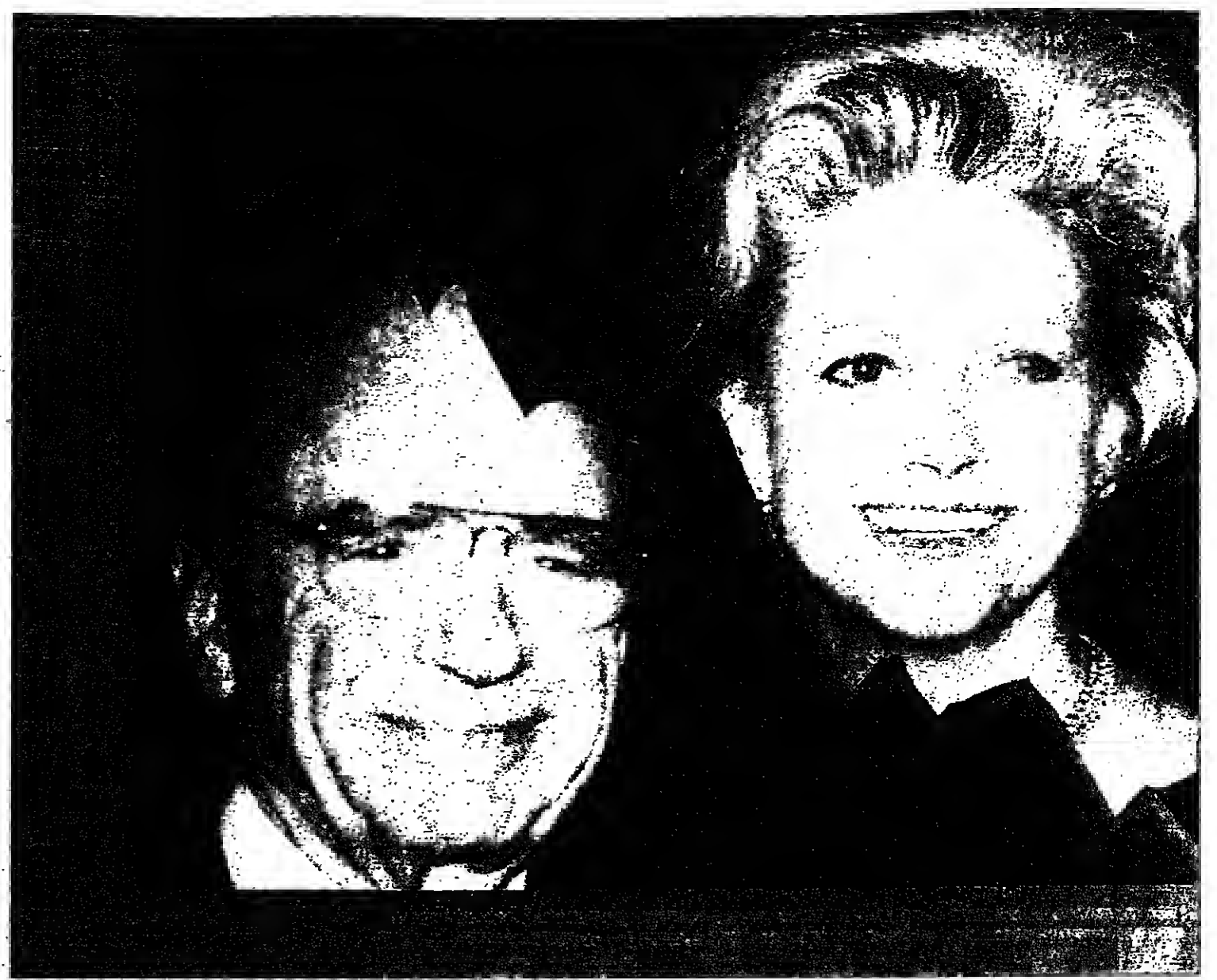
high-profile, senior executives deal with personal and marital stresses at work, and to what extent they take their eye off the ball. "To outsiders, dominant leaders are the only people who shape companies' businesses - even if those businesses are global and management responsibility is delegated and devolved," says Cary Cooper, professor of organisational psychology at UMIST. To insiders, meanwhile, the dominant leader shapes the culture, value system and corporate philosophy of an entire organisation. These are people who individually can make a business feel secure and employees confident and strong, or not - if they are distracted. The degree to which someone is likely to be put off their business stride by personal stress depends on their "coping strategies", he says. "People deal with marital breakdown or divorce in a number of ways - some withdraw and focus inwards, others throw themselves harder into work to forget the situation at home. Amongst the most successful in business, however, there is a tendency for greater resilience. They have learned to cope with failure pretty well. Even so, some believe men are likely to find it harder to deal with at work."

Women have traditionally had to balance major responsibilities at home and work while men have traditionally delegated these duties to their partner, says Anne Simpson, joint managing director of investment advisers PIRC. "Denis Healey was one of the few senior male figures to publicly talk about the value of his 'hinterland' - the stable support provided by his family life and outside interests. All too often, men view their private and professional lives as being in opposition."

The trust of staff and outsiders - such as shareholders and customers - can be an early victim when a business leader's personal life gets out of hand. Professor Cooper adds, "If a senior executive is known to have done something in their private life colleagues disagree with or see as unethical, for example, it has a knock-on effect throughout the organisation - on how staff see themselves and the values they work by, and on how outsiders view the business as a whole."

Take the case of Brian Staples, the former chief executive of United Utilities who was forced out last July less than 12 months after setting up home with his boss's secretary. His affair cost him his job: on announcing his departure from United Utilities, Staples admitted there had been "a loss of confidence to him by the board". Theo there was Sir Ralph Halpern. He hit the headlines when lurid details of an extra-marital affair with 18-year-old model Fiona Wright came to light. Despite weathering the immediate storm as head of Burton Group, Halpern resigned three years

later following a 39 per cent drop in the company's profits. Corporate disasters such as these are driven by a businessman's macho desire to prove himself "an operator on all fronts", believes Miranda Kenyon, managing partner of executives' training consultancy, The Coaching House. Meanwhile, Marks & Spencer chairman Sir Richard Greenbury admitted his regular 90-hour working weeks cost him his marriage to second wife Gabrielle three years ago. Despite coming out of the affair as somewhat sad and a little dull, his business performance - and that of M&S - continues to go from strength to strength. It's hardly surprising, then, that lack of balance rather than fidelity in top executives' personal lives looks likely to be a focus for concern in coming years. Which, of course, brings us back to work-obsessed and power-hungry Mr Murdoch - a globe-trotting obsessive who's even played his children off against one another in an attempt to secure the future control of his global media empire. "There is a prevailing belief today that to get into these top positions, people need to sacrifice their private lives to get on," says Angela Baron, policy adviser at the Institute of Personnel Development. Attitudes, however, are changing. "There is increasing evidence to suggest that a growing number of younger people now starting out in work are still ambitious, but just don't want to make these sacrifices," she adds. "They want a balance across all areas of their lives."



Catalyst: Rupert and Anna Murdoch's split was followed by a dive in the value of News Corporation shares

Illustration: Jonathan Anstee

The issue is how high-profile senior executives deal with personal and marital stresses at work, and to what extent they take their eye off the ball

When football gets that feeling, what does it mean for healing?

Eileen Drewery has been asked to help England win the World Cup. But what does a faith healer do? Clare Nonhebel explains

GLENN HODDLE'S admission of reliance on a faith healer has renewed debate on a subject that has faded from media view since New Age became old hat. Faith is a part of everyone's life; no one has the opportunity to prove every supposition they build their life on. The question is, faith in what? My own 15-year practice of Christian healing has been reassuringly down-to-earth and effective. It started when I was healed myself. Operations and medication failed either to cure the physical conditions I was suffering from or to control the bouts of sickness, pain and unconsciousness. In desperation (and nothing else would have made me do it) I contacted a lady recommended by a friend of my husband's, who had a gift for healing. After a year or so, when I was almost well, I began healing other people. It started with an intuition about someone I didn't know very well - a conviction, that got stronger when I prayed, firstly that he had a problem with drugs, then the name of the specific drug, then a particular psychological problem, then other problems within the family. I thought I was going mad, but the person listened to me and confirmed that it was true. Then his wife started to ask about herself, I went off and prayed, and gave her the answers that came to mind and, again, she confirmed them. A friend of theirs came for help. Then another friend. Then some members of a local prayer group. At first that's all I did: pray for the person, listen, and tell them the answers I was given. If it didn't sound right to them, or didn't help, I prayed again. It only helped the person identify the problem: I wasn't much help in doing anything about it. Laying on hands was something I'd heard of but never seen anyone do. But when one person came to the house in severe emotional distress, then another with a splitting headache, it seemed the right

thing to do. I was more shocked than relieved when the first person reported experiencing a deep sense of peace and the second one's headache went. After a while, it seemed natural. I prayed more but worried less. If people didn't like the answers they received, I no longer lay awake all night agonising that I was either deluded or demonic. I owe a debt of gratitude to the lady who cured me of that: she became furiously angry about the problem I suggested she had, spread imaginative rumours about me for seven years, then came back and told me that the message had been correct but she hadn't been ready to accept it just yet! People don't necessarily get healed in the way they anticipate. The more obvious problem, like arthritis, may take second



Clare Nonhebel. She offers no 'guarantee' of success as a healer

Because the healing is spiritual, it changes people at the deepest level, in their spirit. Physical, mental and emotional improvements are side-effects and are difficult to predict because everyone reacts so differently. The word healing originates from the Old English "haelan" meaning "whole, wholesome or holy". The word spiritual means "concerning the spirit" as opposed to focusing on the material. It is reasonable, then, to expect the purpose of spiritual healing to be to restore the person to a wholesome life, in spiritual terms. Given that, it is surprising how many people who ask for spiritual healing don't want to be involved in anything spiritual and don't want to be healed, in the sense of making their lives more wholesome. Wholeness means much more than a symptom-free body or a sound mind, and involves the entire network of relationships within which each person operates, beginning and ending with the relationship with their Creator. People do claim to have healing powers without being in a relationship of total surrender to God. They either rely on their own powers, or are involved with the occult, which can be incredibly destructive to anyone on the receiving end of their ministrations. I don't doubt people's natural ability to heal. But it's not safe to use this ability except under the rule of God. I would be sad to see anyone put off receiving genuine spiritual healing, but too many people rush to the first person who claims to have healing powers and don't ask enough questions - either of the healing minister or of themselves, about whether their expectations are realistic. When my vacuum cleaner breaks down, I need to know whether it is because it is useless, or whether my use of it has been inappropriate - like sucking up surly Maltasers from the back of the sofa. In the same way, if someone expects me, as a "spiritual healer" to heal their sore foot, instantly and without affecting them spiritually, they may have the wrong expectations and end up disappointed. Ditto, if they want me to guarantee the success of their football team. Sorry, Glenn!

Clare Nonhebel is a novelist and writer. Her recent account of faith *Don't Ask Me to Believe* was published by Lion Publishing in January.

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March of the superbugs

YOU CAN'T see them but there are some very ugly bugs out there and they are getting stronger and stronger. They are clever. They are growing more and more resistant to our drugs. The House of Lords science and technology committee reports that diseases such as tuberculosis and meningitis are becoming increasingly hard to treat with common antibiotics. The so-called hospital bug MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) could soon become completely resistant to the drug used to combat it.

Whilst we entirely believe their Lordships, this news is bit hard to take. If you were looking for the archetypal hoon to humanity, the one single medical breakthrough that has saved more lives than any other, it would be hard to beat antibiotics. The news that this light is failing is worrying even to a generation inured to the idea of impending global economic and nuclear catastrophes. What is remarkable about this potential apocalypse is the casual way we walked into it.

Recent experience has taught us that one of the first places to find carelessness is the farmyard. The use of growth-promoting chemicals and the excessive and unnecessary use of antibiotics has turned our farms into factories for the production of resistant bacteria. We have to do more than just blame the farmers. It is not their fault. You cannot argue that a farmer should cut out growth drugs and antibiotics if that would place him at a competitive disadvantage. Agriculture is an extremely competitive business. Getting your pig or broiler chicken to grow 5 per cent faster is no trivial gain. The obvious answer is to phase out the routine use of these drugs as quickly as possible. This has to be done by government action on a European scale.

But another environment for antibiotic abuse, and one closer to many homes, is the doctor's surgery. A version of the "prisoner's dilemma" operates. Those who have tried to calm a child with a nasty sore throat or infected ear know that you want something that will end your child's suffering quickly. Through the whimpering you may recall that widespread use of these drugs may be driving civilisation towards the arrival of incurable superbugs. But everyone would have to forgo the antibiotic habit to affect things, and not everyone will, and that sobbing sounds louder than any warning.

Many GPs will also want a quiet life and prescribe where it is the safe thing to do, especially where there is severe pressure from the patient. Changes in working habits have greatly increased these demands. Where mothers go out to work they often cannot easily take time off to look after a sick child; in the USA some day-care centres (nurseries) even require a certificate that antibiotics have been taken before a child who has been sick is allowed to return. According to the American Society for Microbiology, the number of American children under six attending day-care has risen to 60 per cent since 1975; over that period, the amount of antibiotics prescribed has tripled, and 20 to 25 per cent of antibiotics in the USA are prescribed for children. Day-care centres are also, of course, an ideal setting for the spread of infection.

The only way to cut through this, again, by regulation. It requires action by government to roll back over-prescription. There is a lot that can be done simply by encouraging best practice and by discouraging the worst cases of doctors doling out these tablets as they might sweets.

But farmyards and pharmacies aren't the only danger-spots. Your supermarket is now selling another potential forcing house - the anti-bacterial chopping board. It will only be a matter of time before we follow the Americans and see many more domestic articles - other kitchenware, soap, even children's toys - which are advertised as containing antibacterials. These may in time become a further serious threat to normal bacterial ecology. It might be prudent to have a look at whether this particular technological leap forward is one that we can live without.

Superbug may already be with us. The bacterium *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* is said to shrug off even the current "last resort" family of antibiotics. We have lived through many such scares that never materialised and we are, most of us, suckers for a little scientific-sounding doom-mongering. This time, though, there's enough to worry about for us to think a change in habits is needed. We may never meet a smaller or a more dangerous foe. We have no time to waste in fighting back.

Cry, God for Cecilia?

ONCE AGAIN, St George's day has come and gone, with no more trace than the usual flurry of articles calling on the English to pay more attention to their patron saint. The Irish revel their way through St Patrick's Day, the Welsh commemorate St David in song and the Scots have long considered St Andrew a symbol of national pride. Yet the English, most of them, remain blandly unmoved by St George. Not even Scottish devolution has persuaded them to rise and praise the gold-armoured knight of myth.

The brave conversion and subsequent dragon-slaying activities of this former tribune under the Emperor Diocletian were the reasons why the 14th-century church elected him national saint, hoping that his military Christianity would inspire Crusaders. But Henry V's injunction "Cry, God for Harty, England and Saint George!" fails to move the modern English heart. A country whose identity is not longer bound up with military conquest does not warm to such shows of belligerence. Dispatching dragons seems a bit of a crime against biodiversity.

We need a new saint for the New Britain. The Venerable Bede, who ran the first cottage industry in hible design, would be one obvious choice to celebrate Britain's eminence in the creative industries. The pop industry of Cool Britannia might prefer that the mantle pass to the patron saint of music, St Cecilia, spice girl of the early church. St Clare, mystical and ecologically-aware consort of St Francis, would appeal to the green and feminist lohnies. But if the casting vote goes to Tony Blair, he would doubtless prefer a candidate whose achievement was the conversion of Britons to a new faith. St Augustine, the job is thine.

AN ORANGEMAN FEELS HIS CULTURE TO BE UNDER THREAT...



Burden of homework

IT WAS good to see someone finally standing up for children being people (Suzanne Moore, 22 April).

My own education was filled with the chik that you did your learning out of the classroom; the classroom was for testing that you had performed the required tasks.

What would I have done if I had been from a household where there was nowhere in the house to read a book in peace? What if I had been one of the less fortunate who shared a room with several siblings? What if I had not had parents who could aid and advise.

The line that children should be doing more homework is not only a cheap fix to the problems the education service faces, but it is also elitist. Children should not have to rely on affluent parents, a quiet household and a small family to have a good education.

R WHITTLE
LONDON SW7

I FOUND Suzanne Moore's article a breath of fresh air. I play guitar and write songs in a band, a creative pastime if ever there was one, but homework seemingly robs me of my free time and gives me no chance to play. I am also interested in politics and philosophy, but simple things like thinking and paying attention to the world around you are nearly impossible with a GCSE workload.

I don't want to go out and do drugs or rob people, I merely want enough time to be able to be myself. After a six-hour school day I am already tired enough, but with two and a half hours of homework the fatigue floods my brain.

If this is "Cool Britannia" then why aren't we encouraged to create? New Labour seems so happy with Britain's current batch of stars that it's forgotten about the future. Work, work, work! Homework! Welfare-to-work! Is this a country or a company?

DAN MCKEE
(aged 16)
Balsall Common, West Midlands

I WAS at secondary school before I knew the gnawing dread which accompanied the knowledge that homework was yet to be completed.

It diverted me from fun on Saturday and cast a deepening shadow over Sunday until it was eventually tackled at teatime.

As a pupil at a wonderful but high-aiming state primary school, this debilitating anxiety has been a constant in my daughter's life since she was just seven and formal homework, in addition to nightly reading, began. Not only has it become a routine and distressing battle between us to get homework done but she has already developed a profound dislike of learning for its own sake: reading to her is something you do when you must, but never for pleasure.

As a mature university student learning alongside the products of a system which sets such great store on more and more homework at an increasingly early age, I can only observe that the general motivation, focus and passion to learn is at a depressingly low level in those who have just left secondary education. They are uninspired and unenthusiastic, discouraging to study with and, I suspect, dispiriting to teach.

We are such a long time adults with years full of obligations, deadlines and stress that we should be delighting in that brief period when life is comparatively carefree and exciting rather than seeking to pack it full of more and more pointless and exhausting work.

MARISA KELLY
Richmond, Surrey

QUITE APART from it being a shame if children were not to have time to sit and stare, that "idle" time is also developing a vital skill. Learning anything requires the ability to reflect: it is what distinguishes learning by rote from true understanding. Whether your child is trying to work out the latest twist in a soap opera plot, deciding if the answer to everything is really 42 or working out why cold water is colder than hot doesn't really matter. What is important is

LETTERS

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It diverted me from fun on Saturday and cast a deepening shadow over Sunday until it was eventually tackled at teatime.

And is not Labour's ultimate goal lifelong learning?

MELISSA HAWKER
Fowmere, Cambridgeshire

MESSRS Blunkett and Straw are to be congratulated on their project to remodel young people in the image of New Labour, but can't things be taken just one stage further? After the exhausted but bright-eyed delinquents have completed their two hours and more of homework and are marching off to begin their curriculum, why can't they sing rousing songs about Cool Britannia before saluting a portrait of Tony Blair?

JON SUTCLIFFE
LONDON SW16

Shell sees the light

SHELL'S decision to leave the anti-environment lobby the Global Climate Coalition is likely to represent a watershed in the fight to make oil companies recognise that their future profitability lies in shifting investment from climate-changing fossil fuels to more sustainable energy technologies - solar, wind and wave power.

While companies like Exxon are still in denial about the existence of global warming and are urging developing countries to base their future on oil, Shell now appears to be repositioning itself to become a leader in these greener industries. It recognises that this is an opportunity to win market share in a tough competitive climate.

It's time that other oil companies woke up to the economic benefits of such a shift instead of exerting their influence over the US Senate to try to wreck the Kyoto climate agreement before it is even ratified.

ANNA STANFORD
Friends of the Earth
London N1

Bishops on the road

YOUR article "£600,000 motoring bill for bishops" (21 April) leaves a misleading impression.

The Church Commissioners provide suitable cars for bishops (mostly at the lower end of the 1.6 to 2.3 litre range) and 31 bishops also have a driver. The cars are not a perk; they are a resource for official use. Bishops, as leaders in the Church, carry out a range of responsibilities and commitments in their dioceses (some of similar size to the county) and may travel nationally. They need a safe, reliable and convenient means of transport, as happens without question in other walks of public life.

The Church of England costs over £600m a year to run, much of which comes from the generous giving of church people. The money spent providing cars and drivers for bishops is 0.1 per cent of this total and is met wholly by the Church Commissioners. It is wrong to make any connection between the meeting of these costs and the closure of churches. Fewer than 0.3 per cent of 16,000 parish churches have closed in each of the years 1994 to 97, arising from local proposals for the reorganisation of ministry, often due to changing population patterns and in some cases a new church opening.

PATRICK LOCKE
Secretary, Church Commissioners
London SW1

Distress signal

JULIAN EVANS (letter, 22 April) notes that, in your front page photograph of 21 April, Tony Blair and Yasser Arafat seem to have flagpoles with each other's flags coming out of their heads. I wonder how many people also noticed that the Union Jack emerging from Chairman Arafat was flying upside down, signalling distress.

RALPH ESTLING
Ilminster, Somerset

Cancer screening

YOU report after Linda McCartney's tragic death that the age at which breast cancer deaths peak is 70-84 ("Searching for a cure for the silent killer of women", 21 April). It is surprising therefore that there is no NHS funding for regular screening with mammography after the age of 64. This seems short sighted as the care and treatment of cancer patients costs a great deal of money. Or perhaps there is a policy to reduce the number of geriatric grannies in the UK?

It is possible to have a mammogram after the age of 64 but only if the woman remembers to telephone her local breast-screening agency every three years. I rang today and was told to "watch the local newspaper" to find out in the autumn when the screening service will arrive in my area. I am sure many elderly people do not have the energy, knowledge, or initiative to follow this up and as a consequence develop untreatable cancers. Perhaps GPs could send out regular notices to these patients to remind them of the screening service. GRISELDA HALL
Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire

Wrong grape

I WAS pleased that David Walker (Comment, 20 April) has such faith that the Wine Society is run for his benefit, but was rather worried that he seemed to have such a lack of information about exactly what he had bought from them!

Firstly, the oak harriques used for ageing Burgundy contain 225 litres of wine, not a hectolitre or so. Secondly, not a single grape of Caherent Sauvignon is allowed in any red Burgundy appellation. Only Pinot Noir is allowed for red wines on the Côte d'Or. Thirdly he has no grasp of what level of wine he has bought, knowing only that it isn't Grand Cru, which accounts for a only a tiny proportion of wine made in the region. I would not expect my customers to be as easily convinced to buy wines unseen and untasted.

PAUL JOHNSON
Great Gaddesden Wine Company
Hertfordshire

Sorry, we couldn't think what to call this article



MILES KINGSTON

I THINK I know why there aren't more book programmes on television or radio. It's because they can't think what to call the programme.

So they give up and do a cookery programme instead.

For the last year or two I have been involved in a literary quiz programme on Radio 4, and the big problem which producer Marc Jobst had right at the beginning was in trying to think of a name for the programme.

"We've temporarily called it *Booked!*," he told us all, back when they were making the pilot programme. "But if any of you can come up with a good name, there's a prize going."

I did actually sit down one day and churn out fifty possible titles for a book programme. It was fairly dispiriting. You are more or less forced to include "write", "read" or "book" in the title. That doesn't

leave a lot of scope. So you find yourself writing down titles such as *Bookshelf* and *Bookmark* and then remembering that there are already book programmes called *Bookshelf* and *Bookmark*, presumably given their titles after long sessions of people trying to think of good titles and failing, and you find yourself crossing them out again...

The only original titles I came up with with were along the lines of *No, But I Heard the Quiz*, and *Well, I'll Be Booked!* and *Author, Author!*. These, along with all other suggestions from other people taking part in the show were quite rightly turned down by the producer as being too unwieldy or too clever. He eventually went to the dustbin and retrieved the initial, tentative name, *Booked!*. Whether he also awarded himself the prize, I never learnt.

There's nothing really wrong with *Booked!* except that it's a rotten title, as

indeed is *Bookmark*, and *Bookshelf*, and *The Write Stuff* (the new TV programme presented by Nigel Williams which seems designed to deter people from wanting to be writers) but in a sense rotten titles are the best titles. If you get a clever-clever title, it isn't terse enough to be remembered, or is not remembered with affection. *Loose Ends* is at first sight a bad title for anything, being so meaningless and giving no clue what the programme is about, but lack of sharpness is what a title needs in order for you to imprint your own flavour on it. In other words, *Loose Ends* IS a good title. And *Whose Line is it Anyway?* is not so good.

Start the Week, *Midweek* and *Stop the Week* are ostensibly threadbare, hardly good enough names for children's programmes, but they turned out fine in the real world, thanks to their naïveté, all except *Stop the Week*, which became *Stop the Week with*

Robert Robinson and thus acquired a limited shelf-life it hadn't had before.

Sometimes a programme does get a title which is just right - so right, in fact, that nobody notices. I am involved in a monthly Radio 2 programme which looks at new books on music, so *Reading Music* (which I didn't think of) is a title which fits like a glove. Russell Davies presents a new programme on Radio 4 which is chat about films, so *Talking Pictures* is an ideal title...

The most curious extension of all this recently has been the appearance of a new programme on Channel 4, all about books, presented by David Aaronovitch and Nigella Lawson, which I haven't seen - no, hold on, I did switch on once, but there was an interview with Martin Amis going on.

Anyway, they must have sweated blood to try to think of a new name for this new

programme, snappy but simple, memorable but not too catchy, apt without being dull.

They finally called it *Booked!*.

Yes, after going through all the possible names for a book programme, they decided to give it the same name as a book programme which has already been going out on Radio 4 for several years.

How can this happen?

My only theory is based on what I was once told by a BBC radio producer who had been given the dismal job of devising an Easter Holiday special, and then given the even more dismal job of finding a name for it.

"Finally, in despair," he told me, "I played the silly arse and told them I'd like to call it *Easter Eggs*. To my horror they all agreed and said it was a great name."

Sounds like the way a programme gets called *Booked!* to me.



The view from Istanbul: all homework and faith healers



RORY BREMNER'S DIARY

"I EXPECT things are easier after the Baftas," says the editor. "Think so," I say cheerily. I was anticipating a quiet week. I cocked up. Turning over the page in my diary I see the following: Tuesday: After-dinner show in London. Wednesday: Show in Istanbul (Don't ask). Thursday: Domingo in Parsifal at the Festival Hall. Friday: Show in London. Saturday: Loch Lomond - Golf Tournament. Sunday: Breakfast with Frost/Charlton. Monday: Art exhibition launch, followed by cabaret and brief speech at party. Tuesday: Dinner in Dublin. And so on.

I'd done a few award ceremonies before, including one for Mobile Phone Salesmen, where 600 men sat in a room arguing about who had the smallest one, and the Carpet Layer of the Year awards, where the floor show was provided by the four finalists who entered to the theme from Rocky and proceeded to lay a carpet, while 300 of us ate our prawn cocktail, occasionally brushing away the showers of sweat flying off the toiling nominees.

This was different. I died trying to interview Julia Roberts who was at first monosyllabic, even with the difficult questions like, "Have you been to London before?" I flailed around pathetically, stammered a few inept questions and realised we were creating a new category: Best Conversation Not In The English Language.

With awards for Robert Carlyle and Sean Connery, and a nomination for Billy Connolly, I found myself wanting to paraphrase Colin Welland's memorable battlecry following *Chariots of Fire*: "The Scottish are Coming."

The reception given to Connery, and the esteem in which he is held around the world, made the decision to overlook his lightheartedness seem all the more commendable. After all, it would have made him the first Bond to be dubbed since George Lazenby. At the end of the programme I was told there was to be a statement from Lord Putnam. I thought how very New Labour it would be for the Government to crown the evening with the announcement of an honour for Connery. Sadly, I was wrong. We were to be told of the death of Linda McCartney.

I sometimes wonder how the Americans view the British equivalent of the Oscars. The brilliant Stephen Fry, who during the Craft Award section (later edited out, alas...) had delivered an inspired tribute to hair ("Hair, Hair! Our dearest friend, our bitterest enemy. It accompanies us on all of life's journeys. Mealtimes without hair are unthinkable, and yet it is almost completely inedible"), re-

minded me of a memorable exchange a few years ago, when Griff Rhys Jones, presenting the show in London, linked to Mel Smith, who was waiting with the American recipients in Los Angeles. "So tell me, are they excited about the awards over there?" said Griff. Mel gave a very long, laconic look at the camera, before replying, deadpan, "They speak of little else."

I'd never been to Istanbul before; it's a fascinating, teeming, romantic place. My first impression is of a cross between Athens and Karachi, as its position straddling Europe and Islamic Asia would suggest. But the Bosphorus, the straight which divides the city and the continents, is a great sight, and like all the massive waterways that cross Europe, fills me with a longing to travel by boat or train across this continent, exploring cities made more exotic by their connection with the Orient Express. Istanbul, Vienna, Bucharest, Ashford.

Watching Britain from afar, catching information from snatched glimpses of a newspaper or from television in airport lounges gives you a pleasantly distorted picture of life back home.

I'm concerned, for example, that the Government has now laid down guidelines stating the amount of homework to be done by each MP. And intrigued that Tony Blair has marked his First Anniversary in charge by appointing the services of a faith healer to inspire his team. I may be getting all this wrong, of course.

I am, however, very interested to read that the Headmaster of Charterhouse's decision to release pupils once they have finished their last A-level has been greeted with howls of protest from parents. They apparently do not want their children back so early and are withholding fees for the three weeks the pupils will not now be spending at school. This is marvellous. The fact that the kids are not wanted at school ("too disruptive") and face persecution if they are returned home must entitle them to some form of asylum. It also confirms that one of the main purposes of public school is to act as a form of kennels for children while the parents get on with their lives, which, as a public schoolboy myself, I can tell you is little comfort as you're bundled into that Group 4 Security van back to school to cries of "It's for your own good!"

Recognition is an odd fruit. Ask any green grocer. Driving with friends through Morocco a couple of years ago, we lost our way in a dried-up river bed in the middle of nowhere. We must have looked an odd sight - a flotilla of 1960s Alfa Romeos, VW Beetles and an old Aston Martin with an Australian metals broker underneath trying to mend the exhaust. Away in the distance a tiny cloud of dust betrayed the presence of another vehicle. Saved! As it edged nearer, we realised it was a small Renault with two middle-aged people inside. "You speak French, Rory," said Tarik, our leader. "Ask them where we are." I duly stammered my way through an incompetent enquiry in French. There was a moment's silence as the couple looked at each other. "ere," said the husband. "Are you that bloke off the telly?"

Let's think any of this is head-swelling stuff, let me tell you real life has ways of deflating you faster than a Branson balloon, as I discovered in France last summer, when I was approached at a restaurant table.

"Are you Mr Bremner?" "Yes." "Mr Rory Bremner." (sigh) "Yes." Wearily I held out my hand to accept the proffered autograph book and pen, only to be handed a familiar-looking wallet. "You left this in the gents, mate". *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

I haven't got my tickets to the World Cup - and I don't care



The World Cup is everywhere, even on the sides of aeroplanes; but who thinks about those who want to avoid it?

Photograph: AFP



SUZANNE MOORE
A NATIONAL OBSESSION

THERE are certain occasions when no one can seriously doubt the theory that parallel universes do actually exist.

I am in one at the moment and can make out a few shadowy shapes that may well turn out to be other sentient beings. I may even start a help-line for people like myself, sad, unformed folks who do not even know when the World Cup starts.

Obviously I have not spent hours on the phone trying to get a ticket. It is apparently easier to win the National Lottery, but then I don't buy the tickets for that either. I can't honestly say that I am appalled that the voice on the answering machine in France speaks French, as some are. Nor do I think it amazingly unfair that the country that hosts the World Cup gets to sell some tickets to its own citizens.

Of course some fans will be disappointed, but that is the nature of the game, isn't it? Flashes of elation interspersed with long periods of losing, tedium and queuing? Surely we should be pleased at this golden opportunity to unite our two glorious national obsessions - hating the French and kicking

halls around muddy fields, in one go.

The assumption however, that this game, football, is an issue of vital importance to every citizen of this particular nation is starting to drive me mad. Presumably by the end of whole saga I will be completely certifiable as soccer saturation is about to occur. Those who do not eat, drink and sleep football, should be afraid, very afraid indeed.

It's not that I don't like the sport. I just don't care that much about it and would like to be able to ignore it if I so choose. Chance would be a fine thing. My beef isn't even that it is a guy thing. I know many women who care passionately about football or at least do a good job of faking it. Yet I cannot get behind our boys in... I have no idea what colour they wear. Does this mean that I

I'm not sure who is Jesus. It has become all things to all men. For some it is a badge of workaday boredom, masculine credibility, an important sign of ordinariness. For others its great appeal is that it now cuts through class barriers and provides a way of talking passionately about something rather insignificant. I don't blame Nick Hornby. He liked football when it was recognised for what it was as a rather sad, degraded and downmarket hobby. He liked it when it was about as fashionable as The Eagles, when the only other people who liked it carried Stanley knives. He liked it when it was not a signifier of authenticity but of desperation.

No, I blame Tony Blair for jumping, or being pushed by Alastair Campbell into rebranding himself as a born-again football fan. I guess this

progressive at the same time. I have witnessed similarly strange conversions among lots of men I know. Men who five years ago boasted that they didn't even know who Cantona was have now come out as life-long football fans. It's weird, isn't it, that during their years at Oxford or Cambridge they never even mentioned it. Liking football, became, like listening to Oasis, a sign of good old-fashioned solidarity. Solidarity with what? you might ask. With other people like yourself, or different from yourself? With an idea of solidarity? It doesn't really matter these days. Rather than being about class, sport as with so many leisure activities, has become a way of transcending class. Or avoiding it. You can have all the pros with none of the cons.

For those handicapped by

what is assumed to be the only conversation worth having.

The argument that football is a way of men talking about their feelings is one that I have never bought. I do not think men should be encouraged to talk about their feelings any more than they already do. The world is dominated by men telling us at enormous length that they cannot express themselves. Nor do I mind if people use football or soap operas or pop music as a way into a common language - that's what popular culture is all about - but I do object to the bizarre synthesis of sport, patriotism and politics that football has become.

Allen that I am, I do not understand quite what it is that I supposed to be cheering on for the sidelines. Englishness? Britishness? The Labour government? A collection of alcoholics and wife-beaters with good legs? Or a selection of young gods? Some great home-coming of soccer and socialism? What's it all about Alfie?

"All our hopes and expectations/Are the world inside a ball", or so goes the official World Cup song *On Top of the World*. Are they really? If that's the case then isn't that really rather pathetic?

Some people's hopes and expectations may be tied to the results of a football match but then you can always fool some of the people some of the time. The rest of us hope and expect that we might be allowed to miss the whole ball game. Some hope. But what a great expectation. If you want to know the score, I suggest you look away now.

Men who five years ago boasted that they didn't even know who Cantona was have now come out as life-long football fans. It's weird, isn't it, that during their years at Oxford they never even mentioned it

should be stripped of my nationality, that I should find myself alienated from the narrative of the nation, that I should end up befuddled in supermarkets because now even doughnuts are named after football players?

There are, I realise, many other parallel universes - fashion, art and politics for instance, but I think it safe to say that you can, if you so desire, ignore them and get on with your life. Football though has been elevated from a sport into a faith. Alan Shearer is God.

was a master-stroke in the radical populist game of New Labour. Major had his warm beer and cricket while, Blair could be vaguely athletic and do "headers" with Kevin Keegan, without even disturbing his hairstyle, obviously a requisite for a successful prime minister. Football became cuddly and wholesome again. A family activity. We will just ignore the cocaine and wife-battering and sheer, unadulterated racism for the time being. Football now manages to be nostalgic and modern, regressive and

not being blessed with the football gene, the future looks bleak. Stories of small boys ostracised by their peers just because they are not interested in this particular sport abound. The same thing happens with grown-ups too. If you cannot speak the international language of football then you simply cannot take part in

Shhh, don't tell ... Tony Blair is a socialist



KIM SENGUPTA
THE REALITY BEHIND THE RHETORIC

THEY would have us believe we are now travelling the Third Way, a brave new journey away from the tired and dogmatic government models of the past. But this, I say, is just New Labour camouflage. Tony Blair is a leftie, and the Government he leads is, to be brutally frank, socialist. I know that his former friends and neighbours in Islington, people who thought they knew him, would start choking on their rocket salads at this, but choke they must. The evidence is there.

It is certainly not something they boast about at Millbank. Indeed there would be acute embarrassment if Rupert Murdoch or Lord Rothermere began to take a close interest. But in less than a year Mr Blair and his cabinet have pushed through a whole raft of measures which would have had delegates raising their pints of Boddingtons at Blackpool at party conferences a decade ago.

This proposition, of course, would be hotly disputed by many, not just in old Labour, who see the mark of betrayal and appeasement in almost every move this government makes. The examples are obvious, and acres of newspaper have been devoted to them: Formula One and tobacco sponsorship, taking away single parents benefit, taxing pension funds, not giving government time to the hunting

with dogs Bill. None of these, however, break manifesto promises, however unattractive they may be to the party's traditional supporters.

No one is suggesting that in the privacy of No 10 Mr Blair and his cabinet shed their Paul Smith suits, don Mao caps and donkey jackets, and belt out The Internationale. But there have been major changes and here are just some of them:

- an essentially redistributive budget, one in which a socialist may take pride, up to a point, according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies; including the restitution of part of the single parents' benefit;

- an extra £2bn for the NHS, £500m of which came from the Ministry of Defence and the DTI;

- £5bn raised from the windfall tax for the New Deal for the unemployed;

- an extra £2.5bn for education, including money from windfall tax;

- the adoption of the European Convention on Human Rights and parts of the Social Chapter;

- liberalisation of immigration laws;

- attempts to follow an ethical foreign policy;

- constitutional reform for Scotland and Wales;

- forcing the Defence top brass to do much more to encourage recruitment of women and ethnic minorities;

- stopping police officers escaping corruption investigations by retiring on sickness pensions;

- ordering the Stephen Lawrence enquiry;

- bringing in union recognition and introducing a national minimum wage;

- proposing to offer a lifetime to the miners after 20 years of government apathy.

Frank Dobson's recent speech announcing extra cash for Health Action Zones to tackle specific problems in particularly deprived areas rang with neo-Bevanite phrases: "young people growing up in ravaged communities... acute deprivation". It provided an easy target for the sketch writers who depicted it as a throwback to a more romantic, naive and doctrinaire time. But what Dobson was saying was not so far removed from the mainstream. What about cutting the arms budget to provide more for schools and hospitals? Or tightening the rules on police corruption? Or overturning two decades of government hostility to offer the miners a helping hand? We may well see future party conferences (although not in Blackpool of course) roaring their approval at reforms of the type demanded ten years ago.

Something else clamoured for at the wilderness years' party conferences was renationalisation of privatised industries.

But should, in the latter half of the 1990s, a failure to do that be seen as a retreat from socialism? That certainly is not the consensus on internationally, where one encounters the continuous dismantling of the state sector with China (the last "socialist" power) one of the most active deconstructors.

In those conferences of yesteryear there were also calls for higher direct taxation, with the cry: "People do not mind paying a few more pennies on their income tax for the NHS and schools". But actually a lot do, although they might not admit it in public.

But there is no intrinsic reason why money should not be raised from the well-off by other means, as the Government is doing now - such as getting them to pay more towards their pensions and imposing non-regressive indirect taxes, such as higher taxes on large company cars. If socialism is "no more and no less than a criticism of the idea of property in the light of public good", as HG Wells held, then can Mr Blair's government not claim to qualify?

Furthermore, there is no valid Keynesian argument for a major round of public spending, leading to a never-ending budget deficit. Successive Labour governments in the past went on a spending spree in the first few years in office, only to have to tighten their belts just in time for the next

election. If Gordon Brown is building up a war chest, Labour supporters should welcome that as good politics.

The Government has also been accused of genuflecting to keep in with Middle England. But some of the social measures it has introduced would hardly appeal to that constituency - such as, changing the immigration rules to make it easier for unmarried and gay couples to settle in Britain and putting pressure put on the armed forces hierarchy to broaden the recruitment base to reflect the make-up of society. Neither was expected. These measures are about fairness, as is the public enquiry into the murder of Stephen Lawrence. It would be cynical to think these three initiatives are just attempts to hold on to the votes of the ethnic minorities; that certainly is not the perception among blacks and Asians I have spoken to. John Major, no doubt, was every bit against racism and bigotry as Tony Blair, but this Prime Minister is doing much more about it.

Where will it all end? Mr Blair and his government catters along at the opinion polls and the Conservatives show no sign of being an effective opposition. The reforms will roll on steadily, but with little acknowledgement. Ministers will carry on talking tough. It will continue to be a socialism which dare not speak its name.

Enlightened, monthly



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Constantine Karamanlis

CONSTANTINE KARAMANLIS was the dominant figure in Greek political life for the last 40 years and an active player on the political scene for the last 60. His exceptional career as President of the Hellenic Republic (1980-85 and 1990-95) and Prime Minister (1955-63 and 1974-80) was devoted to the realisation of three major objectives: the firm establishment of a workable system of constitutional democracy, the integration of Greece into the European Community, and a rapprochement with Turkey leading to a mutually acceptable solution in Cyprus. The historical magnitude of these undertakings, of which only the last remains unfulfilled, would daunt any politician who did not possess Karamanlis's authority and exceptional statesmanship.

The eldest child of a Macedonian schoolteacher who fought in the Balkan Wars (1912-13), was taken hostage by the Bulgarians and died soon after. Karamanlis spent his childhood in the Macedonian village of Proti. The traditional values of Greek Orthodox Christianity were inculcated into the young boy's mind by a strong and loving mother to whom Karamanlis remained attached for the rest of his life.

Conditions at home were Spartan and Karamanlis occasionally worked in the tobacco fields surrounding his village; he was also obliged to assume responsibility for six siblings at an early age. After studying law at the University of Athens he returned to his native province, where he was elected MP for Serres with the right-wing Populist Party at the age of 28. He was re-elected the following year (1936) in what proved to be the last free elections in Greece before the Metaxas dictatorship that ruled until the outbreak of the Second World War.

Karamanlis spent the war years mostly in Athens attempting to organise (with C. Tsoukos, Z. Zolotas, G. Myrvas and others) political resistance against the Germans. In July 1944 he sailed for Cairo in order to join the Greek government-in-exile but was held under arrest by the Greek Communists (ELAS) and later by the British Command in Syria.

He returned to Greece after the war, regained his parliamentary seat in 1946 and was made Minister of Public Works in the Constantine Tsaldaris cabinet, a key post in the post-war effort to rebuild the country. Earlier that year, he had participated in the mission of

Sophocles Venizelos to Washington which secured the instigation of the Marshall Plan for Greece as well as the granting of 100 Liberty-type ships to Greek shipping in compensation for the significant losses it had suffered during the war.

His successive appointments as Minister of Labour (1947), Transport (1948), Social Welfare (1948-50) and Defence (1950) offered him valuable governmental experience. He created the basic framework for the country's national welfare system and successfully masterminded the repatriation of 700,000 Civil War refugees from Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Following the dissolution of the Populist Party, Karamanlis joined the Greek Rally of General Alexander Papagos for the successful elections of November 1955 and was again entrusted with the crucial ministries of Public Works (1952-54) and Transport (1954-55).

It was during this period that he enhanced his reputation as a man of action by transforming Athens into a modern capital and by laying the foundations for the national network of highways which eventually developed into the best road system in the Balkans. Construction of the large electricity-generating dams of the Axios, Aliakmon and Acheloos rivers got under way while major airports and harbours were enlarged and improved.

After Papagos's sudden death in October 1955, King Paul recommended Karamanlis to succeed him. Parliament ratified the appointment with 200 votes for, 77 against.

Karamanlis wielded his newly gained power with decisiveness and perspicacity. He disbanded the Greek Rally party, thus eliminating his fractious opponents, founded his own National Radical Union (ERE) and proclaimed elections for February 1956. ERE won with a large majority (47.3 per cent of the vote and 163 seats) and Karamanlis gained the prime ministership in his own right.

Similar political victories followed in 1958 (41.1 per cent of the vote, 171 MPs) and in 1961 (50.7 per cent, 176 MPs), with the result that Karamanlis remained prime minister for an unprecedented continuous period of eight years (1955-63). His humble origins, handsome bearing and easy-going temperament stood him in good stead with Greek voters. His honesty, forthrightness and practical dynamism safeguarded his reputation as a man of deeds, not



Karamanlis arrives to cast his vote in Athens in November 1974, in the first parliamentary election in Greece for 10 years. Photograph: Hulton Getty

words. Indeed, public speaking had always been his weak point (perhaps because of a hearing defect from youth) and he remained a mumbler. He was advised to keep his sentences short.

Karamanlis's *okuzia* (eight-year rule) was a peaceful and productive hiatus in the turbulence of modern Greek history. Between 1956 and 1963 arable land grew by 70 per cent and the country's agricultural production by 60 per cent. Industrial growth made a similar leap, with the establishment of refineries, chemical plants, steel mills, shipbuilding and cement factories.

One of Karamanlis's early achievements in foreign policy was the signing in 1959 of the Zurich and London agreements recognising the right of Cyprus to self-determination. Cyprus was granted full independence from Britain the following year.

Karamanlis strongly believed in the idea of the European Community and in Greece's constructive role within it. The initial Protocol of Incorporation was signed in July 1961. During 1962-63 Karamanlis attempted to revise the constitution by proposing the creation of a Supreme Constitutional Court which would exercise ultimate

authority on the legality of political parties (the Communist Party was illegal at the time and could not take part in elections) and on the abuse of individual or civil rights (such as civil servants' right to strike).

Karamanlis felt constrained by his government's inability to exercise adequate control over the armed forces and by the Crown's involvement with political and military decisions. He sought to extend constitutional reform further to include a re-drafting of the electoral system.

King Paul was alarmed and, within a few days, 15 government deputies defected in protest at an alleged private pact between Karamanlis and the Liberals. Weeks later, in May 1963, public opinion was shaken by the brutal murder of the left-wing MP Gregory Lambrakis while demonstrating at a peace rally in Thessaloniki. The police were accused of complicity and Karamanlis found himself pilloried in parliament for ineptitude in allowing ultra-right elements within his government to gain the upper hand.

Adding insult to injury, King Paul chose that inopportune moment to demand that his prime minister accompany him and Queen Frederika on an official visit to London. Britain was extremely unpopular with the Greeks for its pro-Turkish stance on the Cyprus negotiations. There were demands that the royal visit be cancelled and violent demonstrations erupted in Athens and Thessaloniki. On 11 June, Karamanlis submitted his resignation, implicitly blaming the king for popular unrest.

Elections were held in November that year and yielded a political impasse with no party gaining a clear majority. In a parliament of 300, the Centre Union gained 140 seats to the ERE's 129, and its elderly leader George Papandreu was given the mandate. Karamanlis realised that Greece had entered a new phase of instability and took the unexpected decision to abstain from politics for an unspecified period.

In an open letter to his party, he made the enigmatic pronouncement that his absence might "help Greece overcome this long-term political deadlock". On 9 December he and his wife flew incognito to Paris. He remained there until the collapse in 1974 of the military junta that ruled Greece after the Colonels' coup in April 1967.

Paris became the centre of anti-dictatorial activity and

Karamanlis its leader. As early as December 1967 he chastised the Colonels as a "government of half-wits" and called upon young King Constantine to replace them with an interim administration which would restore parliamentary democracy. Following the king's abortive *coup d'état*, Karamanlis exhorted the Colonels to surrender power to a government that would hold elections.

The junta's foolhardy attempt to assassinate Archbishop Makarios and unilaterally annex Cyprus to Greece signalled its ultimate demise. In July 1974, Karamanlis was recalled to his native land to head a Government of National Unity. As his plane landed in Athens in the small hours of 14 July, he was welcomed by thousands holding candles and chanting the Paschal hymn of the Resurrection, "Christos Anesti" ("Christ is Risen").

National elections were held in November 1974 and Karamanlis's party, the New Democracy, polled 54 per cent of the vote against the Centre Union's 20 per cent. The Colonels and their collaborators were brought to justice; the issue of the monarchy was resolved by referendum (December 1974);

and a new constitution was drafted introducing the office of president of the republic to be elected by parliament every five years.

The spirit of reconciliation prevailed over political divisiveness and helped the nation regain its self-respect after the disastrous Cyprus débâcle. Greece's Treaty of Association with the EC was re-activated and Karamanlis campaigned for full entry. When told that this would become easier if Greece were to re-enter the Nato military alliance which she had quit over the Cyprus crisis, Karamanlis voiced the country's profound disappointment at Nato's lack of action over Turkey's unprovoked invasion of the island. At home, however, he wisely pleaded for re-entry: Greece's grievances had a much better chance of being heard within Nato walls.

The New Democracy prevailed in the November 1977 elections and Karamanlis retained the premiership until 1980. He enjoyed undisputed authority, steered the country toward union with the EC, improved social policies and generated economic prosperity.

Between 1974 and 1980, in spite of the world energy crisis,

Greece's GNP grew by 26.5 per cent, inflation by a cumulative 14 per cent only and per capita income by 92 per cent. Karamanlis showed personal interest in the Vergina excavations which unearthed the wonderful finds of the Macedonian tombs of Philip and Alexander. He initiated the campaign to return the Olympic Games to their ancient site at Olympia.

In 1980, he removed himself from the leadership of the New Democracy and accepted his party's nomination for the presidency. Duly elected by parliament, he held the post for five years, four of them with Pasok's Andreas Papandreu as prime minister. The alliance proved uneasy as Karamanlis could not condone Papandreu's socialist policies. Two months before his term was due to expire, in March 1985, Karamanlis resigned in protest at the government's plans to reform the constitution and deprive the presidency of substantial prerogatives.

In the elections of March 1990, the New Democracy managed a small majority and Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis offered Karamanlis the presidency for a second time. He stayed for a full term and handed over to his successor, Kostas Stephanopoulos, in March 1995. After retiring to his family home in Politia, Athens he was especially proud to see his nephew Constantine A. Karamanlis elected leader of the New Democracy Party in 1997.

Karamanlis was the leading statesman in Greece for the past 50 years. The only politician to whom he can be compared is Eleftherios Venizelos, who dominated Greek politics for the first half of this century. Both men initiated far-reaching constitutional reforms, both overcame the destructive influence of short-lived dictatorships, both withdrew into self-imposed exile and returned home to win landslide elections. Moreover both men maintained and preached a doctrine of independence for Greece based on pro-Western diplomacy, military strength, friendship with Greece's Orthodox Christian neighbours in the Balkans and normalisation of relations with Turkey.

Michael Moschos

Constantine George Karamanlis, lawyer and politician; born Proti, Greece 8 March 1907; MP 1935-67, 1974-80; Prime Minister of Greece 1955-63, 1974-80; President of Greece 1980-85, 1990-95; married 1952 Anneli Kanelopoulos (marriage dissolved 1969); died Athens 23 April 1998.

Henri Henriad

HENRI HENRIAD was the father-figure of rock'n'roll tour managers - or roadies, as they are called today.

He was born in London in 1930 (found in a sink by a neighbour after his French mother Anais was taken ill), the son of a Swiss-born Savoy Hotel chef, also called Henri. He moved from the age of 11, through boxing turned to wrestling, and was taken out on tour by the promoter Paul Lincoln, who was also the owner of the rock'n'roll haunt the 21 coffee bar in Soho, London.

When Henriad made the transition from wrestling tours

to rock'n'roll tours, his pugilistic skills stood him in good stead on the road with such American rock heavyweights as Little Richard, Gene Vincent, Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck Berry and Brenda Lee, who fell hopelessly in love with him. It wasn't only the fans Henriad had to fight off.

When a promoter booked Little Richard and Jerry Lee Lewis to appear on the same bill, Henriad often had to separate them. On the opening night of that tour in 1964, the two stars argued over which should close the show. Henriad settled it with the toss of a coin which Richard won, but, as

Lewis - a known racist - walked off the stage at Doncaster Gaumont, he set fire to his piano and called out to Richard, waiting in the wings to go on. "Follow that, black man." It was Henriad who put out the fire, saving the show, just as he did with a hundred others during rock'n'roll's most turbulent era.

His friendship with Gene Vincent, a chronic alcoholic, was traumatic and the "Be Bop a Lula" star would have been finished years before his death in 1971 if it had not been for Henriad keeping his show on the road. On one occasion Henriad had to stop Vincent going on

stage for ITV's live show *Sunday Night at the London Palladium*, because he was simply too drunk to perform.

For several years Henriad was the UK representative of the Star Club in Hamburg and was responsible for booking the Beatles there in 1962. He became a particular friend of John Lennon, but despised when "the Beatle that bites", as Henriad called him, could not be weaned off the mind-altering substances (mostly LSD) to which he had become addicted. In 1978 he was amazed to encounter Lennon walking down a street on the West Side of New

York. The first thing Henriad noticed was the smart three-piece suit that Lennon was wearing and his neat haircut.

"Why didn't you give us a ring to say you were here?" Lennon asked.

"I don't have your phone number," Henriad replied.

"I'm in the book," said Lennon, clearly happy that the most respected roadie in the business was there to witness his full recovery.

As a manager Henriad helped to launch the UK career of Jimi Hendrix and was responsible for bringing Emperor Rosko (the film producer Joe

Pasternak's son) to Britain and securing his contract with Radio 1 at its launch in 1967, which led to Rosko's becoming one of Britain's best-known disc jockeys of the Sixties. When Robin Gibb briefly left the Bee Gees, Henriad was there to accompany him on his gigs at the time of his first solo hit in 1969, "Saved by the Bell", encouraging the nervous star (often with the end of his boot) to go on stage.

He was also tour manager to the Animals, accompanying them several times to America. The Animals' bassist Chas Chandler successfully went into

partnership with Nigel Stanger to develop the Newcastle Arena; and they invited Henriad to join them in setting up a "rock'n'roll village" in Liverpool. After Chandler's death in 1996 Henriad took his place as Stanger's partner in the venture, which has now come close to fruition.

After his death, Henriad was described by Sir Jimmy Savile as "One of the greats. The people he moved with may have been stars to the public, but among them Henri was the star."

Henriad leaves, as he put it, "No children that I know of."

Chris Hutchins



Henriad: star roadie

Henri Edward Albert Marcel Henriad, tour manager; born London 13 July 1936; married 1971 Jill Rosenthal (marriage dissolved 1980); 1983 Dinky Davis (née Rose); died Wotton, Hertfordshire 27 March 1998.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

DEATHS

HATTON: David Albert, of Nidd, Leicestershire, born on 2 April 1957, died peacefully on 22 April 1998, will be sadly missed. Funeral Wednesday 29 April, Service 10.15am in Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Mickelthorpe, Derby, followed by private cremation. Family flowers only, please. Donations in lieu for Greenpeace may be sent c/o 101 Macklin St, Derby DE1 1LG.

LLEWELYN: Huw Simon, aged 33 years, much loved husband of Michelle, deeply loved son of Robert and Gillie, beloved brother of Robert and Ben, cherished grandson of Dorothy, Llewellyn, also uncle to Toby and Jacob, died in New York on 21 April after a very brief illness. Funeral Service at St Catherine's Church, Gloucester, on Tuesday, 28 April at 12 noon. Interment at South Cemetery. Memorial Service in New York to be announced later. Enquiries to Doreen Kleinwort Benson, Jessica Brown 0171-475 5451. Flowers may be sent to Goodwin's Funeral Directors, Barton Street, Gloucester, GL1 2SD, or donations to the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy at Dean Trench Street, London SW1P 3AB.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS may be telephoned to 071-293 2012 (24-hour answering machine 071-293 2011) or faxed to 071-293 2010, and are charged at 65p a line (VAT extra).

BIRTHDAYS

Mr Ralph Brown, sculptor, 70; Field Marshal Lord Carver, former Chief of the Defence Staff, 83; Mr John Ernest Collins, former chairman, Guardian Royal Exchange Assurance Group, 75; Lord Coutsfield, Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 64; Sir Peter Cresswell, High Court judge, 54; Sir Clement Freud, writer and former MP, 74; Dame Helen Gardiner, former chief clerk, Private Secretary's Office, Buckingham Palace, 97; Mr Fred Heddell, chief executive, Mencap, 53; Rear-Admiral Sir Joseph Hentley, 89; Mr Richard Jarman, arts consultant and former general director, Scottish Opera, 49; Mr Robert McCarmey MP, 62; Mr Andrew MacKinnay MP, 49; Miss Shirley MacLaine, actress, 64; Ms Margaret Moran MP, 43; Mr James Peice MP, 49; Sir Hugh Park, former High Court judge, 38; Mr Joseph Pearce, footballer, 36; Mr Joseph Rank, former president, Ranks Hotel, 80; Miss Bridget Riley, painter, 67; Mr Martin Seymour-Smith, writer, 70; Miss Barbara Sinczarek, actress and singer, 50; Lt-Col Stuart Townsend, founder, Hill House School, 59; Mr Frank Wheeler, ambassador to Chile, 60; Mr

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS
The Prince of Wales, Prince, BIC National Orchestra of Wales, attends a 7th birthday party given at St David's Hall, Cardiff. The Duke of York, Prince, attends a reception given by the Jubilee Sailing Trust at Chesham House, Isleworth. The Duke of Kent, Viscount, the British Overseas Trade Board, attends a reception marking the 50th anniversary of the formation of the British Overseas Trade Board.

John Williams, guitarist, 57; Miss Paula Yates, television presenter, 38.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Anthony Triloppe, writer, and inventor of the pillar box, 1815. **DEATHS:** Daniel Defoe, writer, 1731; The Duchess of Windsor (Wallis Simpson), 1986. On this day: Mary, Queen of Scots, aged 46, married the Dauphin of France, 1558; founded by Sir Arthur Pearson, the first issue of the *Daily Express* appeared, 1900. Today is the Feast Day of St Eibert, St Fidelis of Sigmaringen, St Ives or Ivo, St Mary Euphrasia Pelletier, St Melitus of Canterbury and St William Fimbert.

Synagogue services
Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 7.58pm.
United Synagogue: 081-343 8989.
Federation of Synagogues: 0181-202 2243.
Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 071-589 1640.
Reform Synagogues of Great Britain: 081-349 4721.
Spanish and Portuguese Jews Congregation: 071-289 2572.
New London Synagogue (Masorti): 071-328 1026.

LAW REPORT: 24 APRIL 1998

Degree of foresight required in joint attack

Regina v Uddin; Court of Appeal (Criminal Division)
(Lord Justice Beldam, Mr Justice Johnson and Mr Justice Wright)
19 March 1998

When considering the degree of foresight required to impose liability for murder on a party to a joint enterprise who had not actually inflicted the fatal injury, the considerations applicable in a case where the death resulted from a spontaneous attack differed from those applicable in a case where there had been a prior agreement to commit a violent offence.

The Court of Appeal allowed the appeal of Rejan Uddin against his conviction of murder, but ordered that he be retried. The victim had died of a stab wound inflicted in the course of an attack on him by six men using poles or bars. The

fatal blow was delivered by Abdul Tahid, who had apparently produced a flick knife as he joined in the attack. Apart from the evidence of one witness, who said he had heard someone shout "Stab him!" there was no evidence that any of the other men knew that Tahid had a knife.

The appellant and Tahid were convicted of murder. The appellant appealed against conviction on the ground, *inter alia*, that in dealing with the question of joint enterprise the trial judge had failed to direct the jury, in accordance with *R v Powell; R v English* [1997] 3 WLR 959, that in order to convict the appellant of murder they had to be sure that, as a secondary party to the killing, he had foreseen the use of a knife as a possibility.

Roy Amlot QC and Michael Levy (Registrar of Criminal Appeals) for the

appellant; **Michael Per QC and Isobel Delamere** (Crown Prosecution Service) for the Crown.

Lord Justice Beldam said that in *R v Powell; R v English* Lord Hutton had said that if a secondary party had contemplated the act causing death as a possible incident of the joint venture, he was liable unless the risk was so remote that the jury took the view that the secondary party had genuinely dismissed it as altogether negligible.

Such an analysis of the assessment of risk, whilst appropriate in the case of criminals who agreed together in advance to commit an offence such as armed robbery, did not readily fit the spontaneous behaviour of a group of irrational individuals who jointly attacked a common victim, each intending severally to inflict se-

rious harm by any means at their disposal, and giving no thought to the means by which the others would individually commit similar offences on the same person.

Where several persons joined to attack a victim intending to inflict serious harm and as a result the victim sustained a fatal injury, they were jointly liable for murder. If, however, the jury concluded that the death of the victim was caused by the actions of one participant which could be said to be of a completely different type to those contemplated by the others, they were not to be regarded as parties to the death.

The use of a weapon by the party causing death was a significant factor. If its character was different from any weapon used or contemplated by the others, and if it was used with a specific intent to kill, the oth-

ers were not responsible for the death unless it was proved that they knew or foresaw the likelihood of the use of such a weapon.

Where, after a concerted attack, the evidence did not establish who had used the weapon which had caused the death, the participants would all be guilty of murder if they had foreseen its use. If, however, the circumstances did not show foresight of the use of such a weapon, none of them would be guilty of murder although they might individually have committed offences in the course of the attack.

In the present case the jury's attention had not been specifically focused on the use of the knife by Tahid, and whether on the evidence they were sure that the others had been aware that he might use it.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister



£15bn price of pensions misselling

By Andrew Verity

THE COUNTRY'S biggest firm of independent financial advisers yesterday warned that the total bill for pension misselling may have been sharply underestimated - holding out the prospect of bankruptcy for hundreds of advisers.

Sedgwick Group yesterday warned that the official estimate for misselling, already put at £11bn by the Financial Services Authority, could still be much too low.

Sedgwick said it was putting aside £35m to cover the cost of compensating victims of missold pension transfers, the first time it has revealed the level of provision it had made.

But the group, which is also one of the UK's leading actuaries, said it was using assumptions made by the FSA's advisers in arriving at the total of £11bn. These assumptions could be much too conservative.

Using more cautious calculations than the Government, the total bill is likely to be closer to £15bn, a 40 per cent increase.

"The potential exists for the figure to be materially exceeded if their assumptions turn out to be too conservative," Sedgwick said in a statement. "We support the intent of the pensions review and the consultative process. The consultation document, however, throws up serious concerns for the independent financial advisory sector and the life industry as a whole."

Life insurers have already stepped in with a multi-million-pound rescue plan for small firms of independent financial advisers (IFAs), which are struggling to cope with the pensions review.

Robert Walker, head of Sedgwick's financial advice practice in the UK, said: "I must ask what the impact is on the IFA if you extrapolate our figures. The number of IFAs has already reduced. There would be more IFAs going out of business. If it is further decimated then the choice for the consumer will be much more limited."

The £11bn figure, which is already more than double previous estimates, was floated as the Financial Services Authority launched the second tranche of the pensions review.

So far, 600,000 urgent cases have been reviewed. In March, the FSA began a consultation to extend this to a further 1.5 million less urgent cases.

The size of the bill depends crucially on interest rates. If these are low, more money must be paid now in order to make up for lower benefits at retirement.

The FSA assumes victims of misselling can expect compensation of £4,000 each. But Sedgwick said interest rates have fallen sharply since the review began, meaning much more might have to be paid.

The FSA also assumes that 35 per cent of pension misselling victims will take up the offer of having their cases reviewed. If 70 per cent respond, the total bill will not be £11bn, but £22bn.

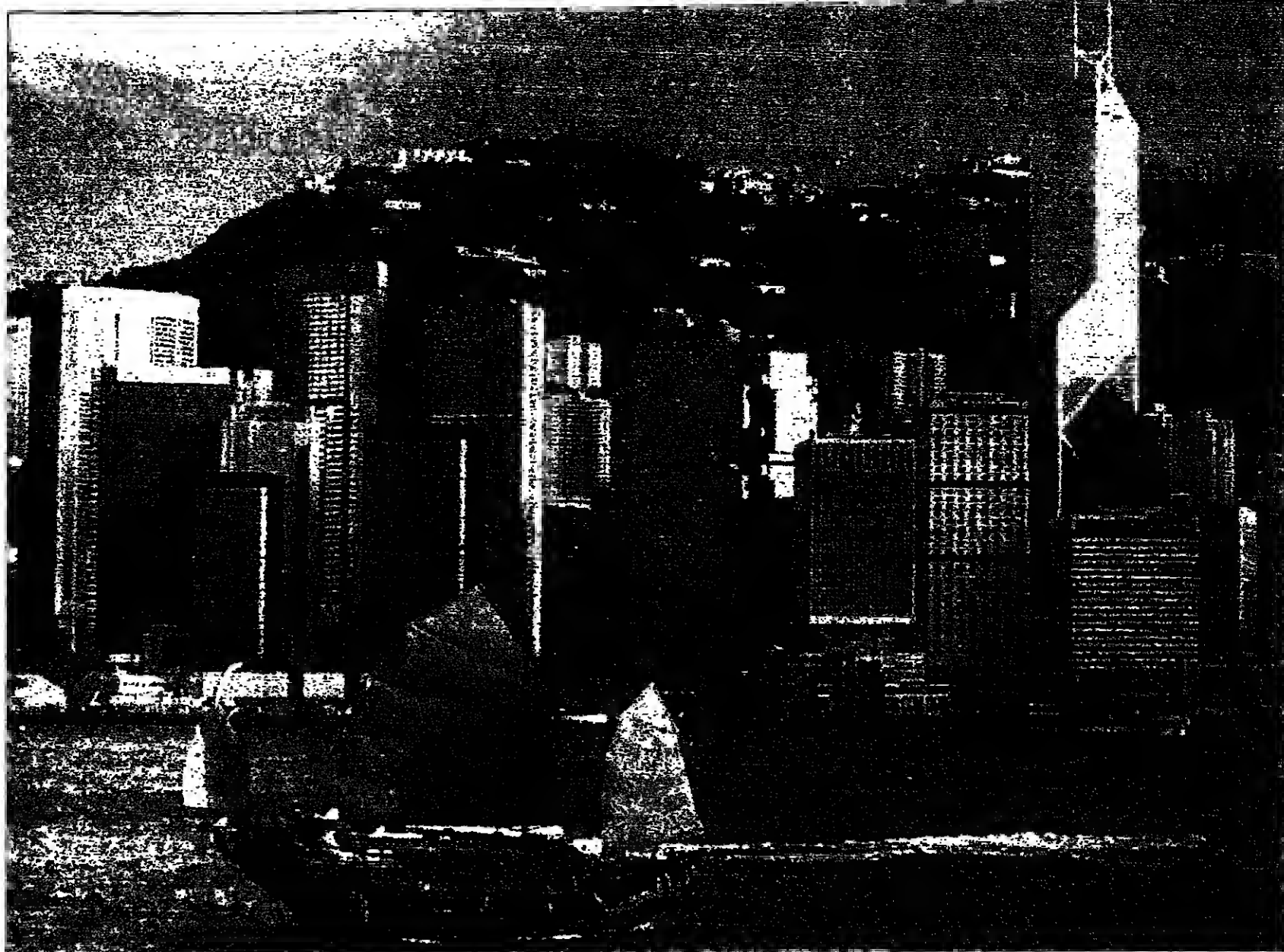
The pension misselling bill has now reached such a scale that many fear it will begin to hit the share prices of quoted companies.

The bill will be picked up by firms who misadvised customers to take out personal pensions rather than stick with company schemes. These are either life insurance sales people or independent financial advisers.

The Pru last year set aside £450m, more than double its estimate when the review began in 1995. The company has admitted that this figure will have to rise now the FSA has launched the second tranche of the review.

The Prudential and other companies have been criticised for spreading 90 per cent of the cost of misselling between policyholders, rather than shareholders. Advisers, by contrast, must load all of the cost on to shareholders.

A spokesman for the FSA said its figure had been independently audited by Bacon & Woodrow, an actuarial consultancy.



Nothing wrong: The Hong Kong government's official post-mortem on the Asian financial crisis found little evidence that the authorities had made mistakes

Hong Kong gives itself clean bill of health over Asia crisis

By Stephen Vines
in Hong Kong

THE HONG KONG government has given itself a strikingly clean bill of health after conducting the first official post-mortem on the Asian financial crisis from within the affected region.

Presenting a 97-page report on the lessons of the financial turmoil for Hong Kong, Sir Donald Tsang, the financial secretary, said yesterday: "If I grade myself among my colleagues in Asia, we are clearly A-plus."

Although there was much talk late last year of the stock market being manipulated, in particular by hedge funds, the government found no evidence to support this claim. Billed as the government's account of how it handled the crisis and designed to identify loopholes and areas for reform, the report found little to repair and scant evidence that the authorities had put a foot wrong.

The complacent assessment came despite Hong Kong suffering severe stock

market losses, an enormous rise in interest rates which has dampened business growth and two spectacular failures of prominent financial institutions.

"The government is using the [report] to blow its own trumpet," said Christine Loh, the leader of the Citizens Party. She accused the government of not addressing criticisms of how the authorities handled the currency system, which pegs the Hong Kong dollar to the US dollar. The system survived the financial crisis intact but at the cost of interest rate rises which hit a high of 280 per cent when the local currency came under attack from speculators last October.

Critics have urged the government to find other ways of maintaining the value and stability of the Hong Kong dollar. However, the government has concluded that all ways of securing the fixed parity of the local currency with the US dollar, aside from the current currency board system, are doomed to failure.

The key to the system is the use of high interest rates to deter speculators trying to get their hands on Hong Kong dollars

for short-term trading. The government acknowledges that this brings pain to home-buyers as well as speculators and has plans to create a mortgage corporation to make home loans at fixed rates.

On the regulatory front the government found that the existing system worked well during the crisis but that there were problems of market transparency and in the operation of finance companies attached to stockbrokers.

In particular the report calls for more information to be given by investors engaged in short selling, in other words trading in shares they do not own but expect to be able to buy for less once the price has fallen. There is also a call for better regulation of warrant issues made by financial institutions.

The stock exchange is to be given statutory backing for the enforcement of its rules and the watchdog Securities and Futures Commission (SFC) is to be given additional statutory powers to extract information. Stockbrokers operating finance companies are to be brought within the regulatory ambit of the SFC.

Thomson staff options 'unfair'

BALPA, the pilots' union, yesterday called Thomson Travel Group's flotation share offer to employees unfair. It claims that the top nine executives are to receive share options 30 times more generous than the options offered to the rest of the group's 14,000 employees. Employees will have free share options equivalent to 10 per cent of their salary, whereas the nine executives will have options worth three times their salary, four times in the case of Paul Brett, the group's chief executive.

These bonuses could exceed £9m, according to Balpa. The union also claims that six of the top executives hold phantom stock in the Thomson Corporation, which they will be able to exercise within six months of floating. "We are shocked by the inequity of the planned flotation," said Chris Darke, general secretary of Balpa.

Tie Rack cuts back

TIE RACK, the specialist ties and scarves retailer, has cut its new store opening programme in half this year after its profits were hit by the strong pound and weak trading at Christmas. Tie Rack has also cut its dividend, saying it was taking a cautious approach to its finances, even though it has £13m cash in the bank. The move angered the City, with some analysts saying Roy Bishko, the group's chairman, wielded too much influence on the board. Tie Rack profits fell from £8.8m to £5.1m last year. *Investment column, page 25*

Inchcape bottle sale

INCHCAPE, the car exporter and international marketing group, said yesterday it was in negotiations with Coca-Cola over selling its Russian bottling operations and hoped to announce an agreement shortly. The move is part of a radical shake up of the company designed to concentrate on its motors business, which also involves selling its shipping operations and demerging its South American bottling and marketing interests.

At Inchcape's annual general meeting yesterday Sir Colin Marshall, the group's chairman, said weak markets in Asia were affecting the performance of its marketing and motors business, but this was being offset by strong conditions in Europe and Australia. The shares slipped 4.5p to 217.5p.

Ottakar's denies bid

OTTAKAR'S, the book retailer that came to the stock market last month, denied yesterday it had received any approaches that might lead to a bid. Ottakar's shares soared by 50 per cent to 352p in early trading on reports that Barnes & Noble, the American bookseller, was set to launch a hostile bid. The shares closed at 234.5p, up just 0.5p on the day after the company said it intended to remain independent.

Unilever to sell Plant Breeding unit

THE ANGLO-DUTCH consumer products giant Unilever is selling its Plant Breeding International Cambridge unit, PBIC, which has operations in England, France, Germany and Scotland. It is the market leader in Europe in winter wheat, and is active in other European seeds markets. PBIC had sales of £16m last year. JP Morgan & Co will advise Unilever on the sale.

Meanwhile rumours swept the market that Unilever was poised to make an offer for Finland's Raisio Group, makers of

a revolutionary cholesterol-reducing margarine. Raisio has developed a margarine that can help actively cut cholesterol levels which has been on sale in Finland for several years and is due to be launched in the US this autumn under a worldwide distribution agreement with Johnson & Johnson. Some analysts were sceptical of the likelihood of any such deal, pointing out that Unilever has worked hard on its own cholesterol-reducing margarine and is unlikely to jettison its own work at this stage.

Acer buys Siemens PC unit

By Peter Koenig
in Taipei

SIEMENS, the German electronics giant, yesterday announced plans to sell most of Siemens Nixdorf (SN), its personal computer business to Acer, the world's third largest PC maker.

Terms will not be disclosed until the deal is completed in the second quarter, but the new strategic alliance between the Taiwanese and German companies will position them to challenge IBM for supremacy in the European computer market. "We're moving more and more into Europe," said Acer group chairman Stan Shih.

Simon Lin, Acer's information products group president, added: "This arrangement will trigger a review of how we organise our European operations."

The move marks a further step in Siemens' 18-month effort to cut costs and shed unprofitable businesses. It came just a day after the company said second-quarter profit rose by a lower-than-expected 3 per cent.

Acer, which is due to report 1997 turnover of more than \$6bn, will make SN's manufacturing and assembly plant in Augsburg, Germany, its European headquarters. The Augsburg unit has 200 employees and makes 1.4 million computers a year.

In 1997 SNI reported turnover of \$8bn (£5bn).

The deal will come as a blow to the UK. Until now Acer's European headquarters has been in Cardiff.

Half a dozen Taiwanese computer companies now make computer products in the UK. Mitac, one of Acer's biggest competitors in Taiwan, has a £4m assembly plant in Telford. But company chairman Matthew Miao said in an interview this week that he was considering the Netherlands for further expansion in Europe.

Taiwan's information technology industry forecasts sales of \$200bn by the year 2000. It is intensifying its efforts in Europe to offset a loss of

business in Asia as a result of the region's financial crisis. In the first three months of the year Taiwan recorded a 24 per cent drop in exports to Japan.

Acer makes eight million personal computers a year under its own and other brand names. It says Europe will account for 25-30 per cent of its global sales after its deal with SNI.

The acquisition of SNI's Augsburg operation will include the German company's research and development facility. SNI's chief executive, Gerhard Schulmeyer, said: "The co-operation will enable us to continue to deliver state of the art technology in the PC environment."

Microsoft profits rise to \$1.34bn

By David Osborne
in New York

MICROSOFT had the slowest growth in revenue since 1996 in its third quarter earnings. It is small blot, however, on yet another stellar performance by the Seattle-based software giant.

Indeed, the strength of the quarter is an almost unwelcome embarrassment of riches for Microsoft as it continues its legal battle against the US Justice Department over whether it has violated competition agreements designed to loosen its grip on the personal computer market.

Hence the efforts by officials of the company to convince analysts and investors that the coming few quarters could prove disappointing. Potential problems that they highlight are increasing sales of sub-\$1,000 PCs, slumping sales in Asia and huge as-

sociated with the year 2000.

While the price of Microsoft shares did fall back in early trading yesterday, it followed a per-share leap of \$4 to \$98.875 in trading in Wednesday in anticipation of the earnings announcement.

Profits at the company rose to \$1.34bn in the third quarter, better than estimates on Wall Street that had already been revised upwards from earlier forecasts. That represented profits of 50 cents per diluted share. Analysts had expected a figure of 48 cents a share.

"Business fundamentals continued strong across most geographies, especially North America, fuelled by the continued strong adoption of Office 97 by large and small customers alike on a worldwide basis," commented Steve Ballmer, executive vice president. Business in Asia had not fallen as badly as some had expected. The huge profits, and especially

a net profit margin that leaped to 35 per cent, quickly drew the attention of politicians in Washington anxious to see the Microsoft juggernaut slowed. As well as the Justice Department investigation, the company is facing similar anti-competitive investigations in numerous US states.

"I would defy you to come up with any major company in any major industry that makes that kind of money," said Senator Herb Kohl of Wisconsin. A federal appeals court heard Microsoft's appeal against the Justice Department's suit against it just this Tuesday. The suit accuses Microsoft of violating a 1995 agreement not to force computer makers to bundle its Internet browser, Explorer, into its Windows 95 system.

"What's amazing is the kind of growth they're showing without a new product cycle," said Esther Schreiber of CS First Boston.

Executives said they did not expect to see much impact from the impending July launch of its upgraded Windows 98 product until the first quarter of 1999. First shipments to shops of Windows 98 should begin next month.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Alpha Airways (F)	702.2m (84.8m)	15.5m (7.8m)	4.52p (0.37p)	6.34p (0.25p)
Austin Reed (F)	82.63m (78.18m)	7.8m (6.8m)	17.1p (14.2p)	7.5 (6.5p)
Buenavista (F)	10.25m (83.0m)	-0.324m (-0.980m)	-0.13p (-0.21p)	nil
Canal Group (F)	288.51m (282.17m)	19.538m (17.416m)	20.4p (20.8p)	9.75p (8.9p)
Falmer Group (F)	-	5.848m (6.007m)	13.74p (14.43p)	2.08p (1.90p)
Forvisstar (F)	33.8m (19.47)	4.2m (1.25m)	10.15p (6.48p)	3.37p (2.54p)
T2 Hughes (F)	75.02m (82.97m)	3.911m (1.817m)	10.17p (5.14p)	3.37p (2.83p)
Hardfry Technology (F)	85.56m (85.79m)	11.48m (11.877m)	8.16p (9.04p)	3.1p (2.93p)
K2 (Q)	2.38m (2.43m)	87.9m (85.9m)	8.4p (4.0p)	nil
The Rank (F)	104.18m (105.14m)	5.081m (8.788m)	6.21p (10.73p)	4.5p (9.35p)

(F) - Full (I) - Interim (Q) - Quarterly EPS is pre-exceptionals

THE INDEPENDENT

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Whodunnit? The hawk that squawked in the night



OUTLOOK ON THE TENSIONS WITHIN THE MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE AND US. ELECTRICITY TAKEOVERS

IT WAS real-life financial Cluedo. Who leaked what to whom - if at all? Is one of the doves on the Monetary Policy Committee trying to undermine a shrinking group of beleaguered hawks by letting slip to the Financial Times that the once hawkish Charles Goodhart had deserted his perch? Was the Bank taking a leaf out of the Treasury's book and seeing what a spot of spin-doctoring would do for the still-overvalued exchange rate? Or was this just a case of careless talk. Or then again, might this not be misinformation?

While the storm of speculation raged outside, hatches were being battened down in Threadneedle Street. The Bank had no comment. Yet alongside Professor Goodhart's alleged switch from hawk to dove in April, we have the fact that the gap between the two nests - however many feathered friends there are in each - is growing deeper. While the argument is about a mere quarter point on interest rates, it looks narrow enough, but it becomes a real chasm if the two parties cannot even agree on a single inflation forecast. The key difference here between members of the Committee is at what level the pound might settle and what the impact of this might be on inflation.

The leak, when combined with the widening split on the committee, raises some urgent questions about the monetary arrangements put in place by the new Government. One is the speed of publication of the MPC's minutes. There would certainly be less incentive for anybody to leak if they were published sooner. Besides, the case for such a long delay - the need to minimise mar-

ket speculation ahead of each meeting - is hardly compelling given that there is so much speculation about each vote anyway.

But the deeper and more important issue is whether the new arrangements are capable of delivering the combined policy goal of low inflation and stable growth. Economists are notoriously argumentative, and the batch on the MPC was deliberately chosen by the Chancellor to reflect a range of views. It is perhaps no surprise that they should disagree, especially at a time when there are big uncertainties about the economy. But if the two camps differ enough to want to publish their own separate inflation forecasts, how can we be confident the Committee will set the right interest rate?

Other central banks manage to harbour similar disagreements, but without nearly so much fuss. For example, the US Federal Reserve's Open Markets Committee works on a majority vote, publishes names of which members vote which way, and delays the minutes until a week or two after the following meeting. Fed-watching is a major sport on Wall Street too, but there is rarely the kind of uproar seen here yesterday.

Perhaps we Brits still need to get used to the fact that grown-ups can argue. After all, interest rates are more or less set at the right level, and whatever the doubts about the current arrangements, they are a big improvement on the farrago of Chancellor-Governor meetings we had before. Yet a faint worry remains: if at the turn of each cycle the interest rate debate is going to rage until events persuade either the hawks or doves to change their

mind, this could mean the MPC is doomed forever to move too little, too late. Tricky stuff, monetary policy.

Americans light up the town...

IT MUST be that time of year again. With the battle for control of Energy Group reaching its final denouement (it's been a long time coming), you would expect the top brass of Texas Utilities and PacificCorp to be in town. But apparently it's not just them. Virtually every American electricity boss of any size (his company, not his girth) seems to be setting up court in London right now, we exaggerate not. What on earth could they all be doing here?

The only credible explanation is that they are looking for deals, but with Energy Group about to be taken out of the ring, who's left? With all 12 regional electricity companies now auctioned off (apart from Southern Electric, which no one wants), the only obvious remaining targets are the generators - National Power, PowerGen and British Energy. Everyone's talking, it is said, but is anything going to come of it?

All three of these companies are cheap by American standards. Furthermore the big American players need to diversify internationally. Back home they face deregulation and enforced separation of generation from transmission. Companies like National Power are beginning to do to them back home what they have been doing to National Power over here - eroding its core market by building or buying com-

peting power plants. When you are facing inescapable pressure in your home market, the obvious response is to attempt to expand internationally.

The problem is that both National Power and PowerGen - and increasingly British Energy too - are intensely independent and proud of their Britishness. They are not interested in being taken over. On the other hand, City rumours that National Power may be forced to cut its dividend a few years down the line - vehemently contested - are hardly helping its case. The Government's gold-share has been used once before by National Power to see off a hostile foreign bid and it would do it again if necessary.

Shareholders are not going to thank National Power's Keith Henry for that, however, so why doesn't he reverse the tables, turn predator, and nab one of the US's big players instead. National Power has been highly successful in its international strategy thus far, and it might be able to muster support for such a move. Price is a stumbling block, and there are still some formidable regulatory hurdles to surmount. But it may be possible. Either way, the balls are rolling. The utility sector looks destined to provide continued excitement.

... but leave Energy Group in the dark

ONE PERSON who will probably be glad to see the back of the Americans is Alastair Defriez, the director general of the Takeover Panel. His last Christmas hut one was thoroughly ruined by the unfestive cli-

max to CalEnergy's hostile bid for Northern Electric. He is therefore understandably anxious to make sure the Texas-PacificCorp tussle for Energy Group does not end in similarly acrimonious style with the Panel again left playing piggy in the middle.

The market is saying that the battle is not over. Energy Group's shares are standing 27.5p above Texas' 840p offer. Even taking into account the arbitrage opportunities that are available in this bid, that is still a large gap. On the current timetable, the latest offer could have raised their offer was midnight on Sunday. Should PacificCorp manage to rustle up enough cash to improve on its 820p offer, it could have crept in just before the deadline, put another 30p on the table before you could say ten gallon hat and walked off with Energy Group.

The Panel, nudged in the ribs by Texas, and has now extended the offer period to ensure that the bid battle ends in a "fair and orderly" manner. This will either mean both bidders being invited to tender final sealed bids (which Texas will not fancy since it is already out in front) or some form of auction process with a defined cut-off point.

The last time the Panel had to intervene in this way was back in 1983 when BAT and Allianz were slugging it out for control of Eagle Star. On that occasion the Germans decided to throw in the towel before the sealed bids were opened.

If PacificCorp does likewise then the market will be entitled to ask what on earth its financial adviser Goldman Sachs has been doing given that PacificCorp has already had a whole week to decide whether to put up or shut up and go back to Oregon.

Lea Paterson reports on growing worries over the watchdog's powers.

Heavy-handed Imro facing City backlash

SEVERAL leading City figures have expressed concern over the conduct of one of its leading watchdogs in the wake of the Peter Young fund management scandal.

Imro, which regulates the fund management industry, has been accused of acting as "judge, jury and executioner", by one figure, and some have called for an external auditor to be appointed to look into Imro's investigations.

Others, though, have been more sympathetic towards the regulator, saying it is "important for a watchdog to be seen to be taking a tough stance". Imro itself said that its investigations were overseen by an enforcement committee, and that only one Imro board member sat on that committee.

The current debate about the appropriate role for Imro, and indeed other City watchdogs, has been sparked by Imro's ongoing investigation into the five former executives of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell (DMG) who have been implicated in the case of Peter Young, sacked from the fund manager over allegations of serious irregularities in the running of three of his funds.

Keith Percy, chief executive of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management (MGAM), Graham Kane, manager of unit trusts, Glynn Owen, chief international investment officer, Michael Wheatley, compliance director, and Paul Ebling, a compliance officer, all left DMG soon after the Peter Young scandal came to light. The results of Imro's investigation into the five are expected to be published shortly.

Mr Young, the former fund manager, is still under investigation by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) after three of his funds were temporarily suspended back in September 1996 due to "serious irregularities". MGAM, his employer, was later fined £2m and ordered to pay £1m costs. Deutsche Bank, MGAM's parent, spent millions of pounds bailing out investors who were caught up in the scandal.

Philip Warland, director general of Autif, the unit trust association, is among those who harbour concerns about Imro's use of its powers. He said: "I would like to see some process established whereby Imro's enforcement process is subject to some type of external check. We feel the way Imro operates is as judge, jury and prosecuting counsel."

At least some of the five former DMG executives are now thought to be facing a ban on working in the financial services industry. They have been under investigation for a number of months and, with the exception of Keith Percy, have not been employed within the financial services industry since leaving DMG. Mr Percy was recently appointed as a consultant to Societe Gen-



Philip Thorpe: Head of Imro



Peter Young: Disgraced fund manager

sources, although DMG has, to date, helped with the legal costs. However, costs could easily exceed £500,000 each if the five appeal to a tribunal following the initial investigation.

Four of the five executives are thought unlikely to appeal against Imro's findings, largely because of concerns over the spiralling costs of the inquiry.

One fund manager said: "This all seems to be contrary to natural justice. Any appeal system should be accessible to anyone who wishes to use it. It is wrong if people do not have a chance to plead their case."

Another City source said: "I have no problem at all with people who have done something wrong being disciplined, but there is no reason whatsoever why they should be pushed into bankruptcy."

One prominent lawyer said: "It does not seem right that individuals have to go into an appeal with very little idea what their likely costs might be. The costs of going before a tribunal frequently run into hundreds of thousands of pounds, and there is no cap on their level."

Another source added: "It seems unfair to deny these people the chance to earn fees in the industry whilst they are racking up high costs."

Not all, though, were in agreement. Many in the City emphasised the need to protect the general public as well as the importance of a regulator "showing it had teeth".

An Imro spokesperson denied the watchdog's regulatory procedures deterred innocent people from taking their case to appeal. She said that individuals who had done nothing wrong would not be asked to bear the costs of the investigation.

She also disagreed with the view that Imro acted as "judge, jury and executioner". All Imro investigations are overseen by an enforcement committee on which only one Imro board member sits. This committee acts as "judge and jury" to the Imro officials looking into the case, she added.

The spokesperson said: "In any case, a tribunal is not the only course of action open to individuals [who are dissatisfied with Imro's findings]. They could complain to the SFA, to Imro's chairman or write to their MP."

Two months ago, Imro publicly reprimanded Leslie Bruce Hacking, a former Imro compliance officer for his failure to report irregularities in funds under the control of Mr Young.

In particular, Imro said Mr Hacking should have reported "certain material matters of which he was aware from April to August 1996". Mr Hacking also agreed to pay Imro's investigation costs of £24,228.

Applied Power purchase ends Vero shareholders' misery

By Andrew Yates

SHAREHOLDERS in Vero, which has been one of the most disappointing flotations of recent years, were put out of their misery yesterday when the group was bought by Applied Power, the American electronics and engineering group.

The agreed £94.4m bid for Vero values the group at 157p a share compared to a flotation price of 220p when the group came to the market in November 1995. Its shares had fallen as low as 78.5p last December but jumped 33p to 152.5p yesterday.

Vero has proved another embarrassment for Cazenove, the blue-blooded institution

which sponsored the flotation and whose reputation had already been battered by the dire stock market performance of Linelight, another one of its flotation flops.

The deal will make millions of Brian Gay, the group's managing director and David Thomson, the finance director who were part of a management buy-out team which

acquired the business from BICC in April 1994.

Vero makes racks and enclosures to house electronic equipment. Almost three quarters of its products are exported and it has been hit by the strength of the pound. Its share price has also suffered from smaller manufacturing stocks going out of fashion with institutional investors.

Aircraft total to double

By Michael Harrison

AIRBUS Industrie yesterday shrugged off the Asian downturn by forecasting that the region would become the biggest single air market in the world in the next 20 years, accounting for a third of the world aircraft fleet.

The prediction came as Airbus forecast that the number of aircraft in service would double by 2017 with the world's airlines taking delivery of 13,600 new jets worth \$1.2 trillion between now and then.

According to Airbus' latest global market forecast, air traffic will grow by an average

of 5 per cent a year between now and 2017. Despite the downturn in Asia-Pacific, this region and the Pacific Rim countries including China will still enjoy the fastest rate of growth, averaging 6.6 per cent a year.

By 2017 the region will have overtaken North America, accounting for 33 per cent of the world fleet compared with 25 per cent today. The share held by North American airlines, meanwhile, will decline from 38 per cent now to 29 per cent.

Adam Brown, vice president of forecasting and strategic planning for Airbus, cautioned,

however, that congestion in the air and at airports could hold back the expansion of the world aircraft fleet.

Airbus forecasts that the number of aircraft seats will increase by 135 per cent over the period but because the world's airlines will move to bigger and bigger jets, it will only require a 90 per cent increase in aircraft numbers to cater for this demand. The size of the average aircraft is forecast to grow from 179 seats today to 227 seats in 2017.

The biggest share of the market will be taken by aircraft in the 300-400 seat category such as the Airbus A330-340

range and the Boeing 777. Airbus said that the market for super-jumbo aircraft would total 1,300 jets worth \$301bn.

Airbus is pressing ahead with the development of the A3XX, a double decker aircraft with a range of up to 8,750 miles capable of seating 656 passengers.

However, it has put the in-service date back by a year to 2004. Airbus put development costs at \$8bn and said the programme should be launched towards the end of next year. It is aiming to find risk sharing partners to support 40 per cent of the development costs.

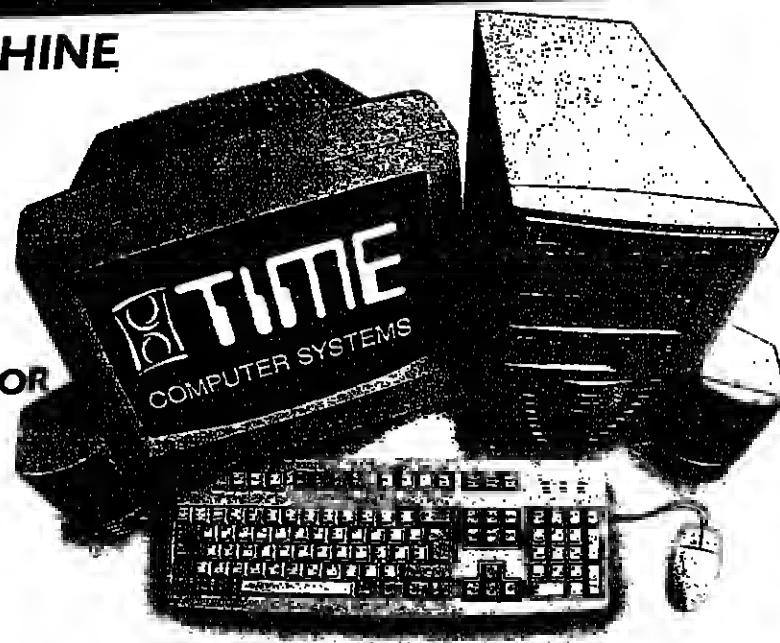
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THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY ANDREW YATES

Tie Rack troubles may not be over

ROY BISHKO, the perennially upbeat chairman of Tie Rack, was looking remarkably relaxed yesterday considering the pounding his company is taking. The shares have slumped from 203p to just 73.5p in a year and there is no sign that the bad news is over yet.

The strong pound has taken a heavy toll on the group, which relies on overseas markets for over half its sales. Currency impacts knocked £2m off full-year profits, which fell from £8.8m to £5.1m last year. Profits in Europe plunged from £3.2m to just £625,000 due to the pound and weak markets in countries like Germany. In Asia Pacific profits fell sharply too and the UK stores have suffered from lower tourist spending.

This much was in the price after the profits warning in January. But the decision to cut the dividend was not. Mr Bishko justified the decision to cut the payout from 3.35p to 2p by saying that he did not want Tie Rack to be in a hole to the banks and it was time to be cautious. This seems odd, seeing as the cut will save Tie Rack just £700,000 and it has £13m in the bank. Mr Bishko may be right to urge caution in other ways but this sends a signal that he expects 1998 to be much worse than last year.

He could be right. Tie Rack never reveals its like-for-like sales figures, which is a shame, as they are one of the key indicators of retail performance. But the suspicion among analysts is that they have been flat, at least in the UK, for a couple of years. Given that the company is now cutting its store opening programme in half this year it is difficult to see where the profits growth is going to come from.

Capital expenditure will be targeted at store revamps and marketing instead, as Tie Rack feels UK high street rents have reached unsustainable levels.

Current trading has got tougher since the January sale and though Tie Rack has ended forward contracts which locked it into higher currency prices in Lie, for example, the pound will still hamper growth.

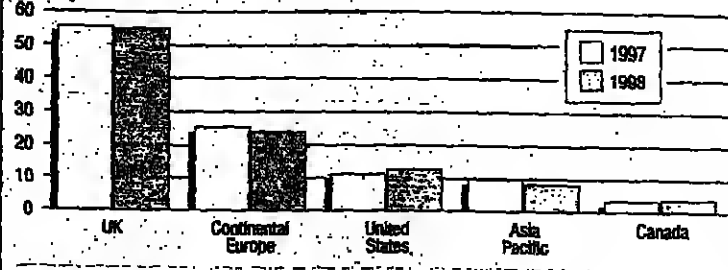
On current year forecasts of £5.4m, the shares, down a further 8p yesterday, trade on a forward rating of just 11. But they are not worth buying even at that level.

Tie Rack: At a glance

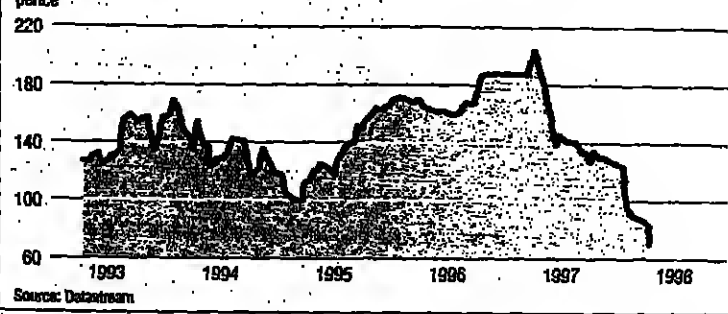
Market value: £28.6m, share price 73.5p (-8p)

	1996	1997	1998
Turnover (£m)	78.1	83.9	96.6
Earnings per share (p)	8.0	9.3	10.7
Dividend (p)	3.35	2.00	2.00

Sales by region



Share price



Source: DataStream

AB Airlines takes off into a storm

A FIERCE battle is raging across Europe's skies. A series of cut-price "no frills" airlines such as EasyJet and Ryanair have sprung up from nowhere, threatening the traditional stranglehold of the large airlines. Not surprisingly, the likes of British Airways have launched an all-out war by creating their own discount services.

Against this stormy backdrop, the flotation of AB Airlines, yet another small airline, appears oddly timed. At first glance it seems that the fledgling airline, which has yet to make a profit, is likely to be squeezed from both ends of the market. But AB has several aces up its sleeve that are not apparent to the casual observer.

Most importantly, the large number of slots it holds at Gatwick could be worth a fortune. The strong growth

in the number of airline passengers over the last few years has seen the major airports reach bursting point. The value of landing and take-off slots has risen accordingly. AB already has nearly 900 slots and that should rise to around 1,000 this summer with the group doing better than most in the latest auction of new spaces.

AB's strong slot portfolio is already attracting other airlines who want to connect to its routes to Shannon in Ireland, Berlin and Lisbon. Aer Lingus has already signed a deal to take half of the seats on flights to Shannon, using AB's service to connect to its transatlantic routes. Other carriers desperate to get into Gatwick must already be casting their eye enviously over AB's slots.

And unlike other cheap and cheerful airlines, AB has steered clear of the most popular destinations, sticking to less competitive routes. There are risks. If the airline market takes a dive, so will the value of

the slots and AB is unlikely to make a substantial profit for some time.

The shares had a disappointing debut on the stock market yesterday, slipping 1.5p to 93.5p. But the group which is valued at £25m, should provide investors with solid long-term value.

The prospect of free upgrades to business class for longstanding shareholders is an added incentive to buy the shares.

Country Casuals suits Austin Reed

AUSTIN REED, the gent's outfitter and the highest manufacturer of hand-tailored suits in Britain, is looking forward to a fuller profile after the £26m acquisition of Country Casuals, the womenswear chain.

The existing Austin Reed business is ticking along nicely. It made £7.8m before tax in the year to January, an increase of 15.4 per cent, and margins also showing a healthy rise.

Retail sales rose 6.8 per cent on a like-for-like basis although the strong pound hit export orders at the manufacturing business, where sales dipped 4 per cent to £13m.

In the coming year three more stores will open, and capital expenditure will increase from £2.6m to around £4.5m.

As for Country Casuals the acquisition had no impact on last year's figures. But after a rocky few years the business made an underlying profit of £3.2m in 1997. Austin Reed's new purchase should have solid future now Country Casuals has shed a bunch of loss-making businesses. And there is plenty of cost-cutting to be done. There is scope to cut overheads by up to £500,000 and the group is considering amalgamating the two London head offices, although the retail businesses with remain separate.

The enlarged group starts the current year with debts of £23m and gearing of 71 per cent. Chairman Colin Evans hopes to get gearing down to 60 per cent in the current year but interest charges on the enlarged debt could absorb the best part of £2m.

The City liked the figures and analysts are looking for profits of £9m-£9.5m and earnings of around 20p to the current year. The shares rose 12p to 177p yesterday and at under 10 times forecast earnings they are still well below the sector average of 18 times earnings. Buy.

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

JOHN WILLCOCK



ROBIN BUTLER, now Lord Butler of Brockwell, the former Cabinet secretary, has not sat still since he stopped being the country's top civil servant last year. Apart from becoming master at his old college at Oxford, he has added a non-executive directorship at ICI to his retirement portfolio.

He is joining ICI, once the bellwether of British industry, from 1 July. But before anyone makes the usual complaints about former government insiders rushing off to the City to cash in, it's worth noting that Sir Robin has waited twice the required interval before taking a commercial post.

THINK of a honeymoon and most people imagine lazing on a deserted beach in the Caribbean. Some are happy just to hang the Do Not Disturb sign on the door and retire to bed. But not Robert Bonnier. The chief executive of Freepages, the telephone and internet directory company behind those wacky "Scout" adverts, is planning to swap post-nuptial bliss for a whirlwind tour of South-east Asia.

Of course, Mr Bonnier is not like most folk. At 28, the Dutchman has packed more into his career than most manage in a lifetime. After starting off in the corporate finance department of Swiss Bank, where he worked alongside the likes of Chris Akers - now running Leeds Sporting, owners of Leeds United football club - he moved over to Freepages as finance director.

After tying the knot on Saturday, Mr Bonnier and his betrothed, Tracy, will jet off for an action-packed holiday which includes white-water rafting and week's sailing off Thailand. It makes me feel tired just thinking about it, but Mr Bonnier is unrepentant. "I just can't sit still," he shrugs.

TECHNICAL snags at the launch of Airbus Industrie's annual global market forecast at the swanky Park Lane Hotel, London, try as he might, John Leahy, Airbus's senior commercial vice-president, could not get the hi-tech slide show to work properly.

Finally he resorted to the manual approach. But like all good salesmen he still managed

to end the presentation with a dig at the opposition. The software for the presentation had, said Mr Leahy, come from Seattle. Which, as everyone knows, happens to be the home of Airbus's arch-rival Boeing.

THE MARATHON season is upon us once again, taking its annual toll on unfit runners and innocent motorists trapped in their cars while trying to cross the capital. Among the 41,500 entrants for the London Marathon on Sunday are 476 bankers, 472 insurance brokers, 125 stockbrokers, 135 financial analysts and 44 economists.

Guy Walker, the chairman of Van den Bergh, the makers of Flora margarine and sponsors of the event, will be taking part, though he does not expect to win.

If that was not enough exercise for one year, the Marathon is followed shortly by the 20th Tower Jog on 6 May, sponsored by AB Ports in aid of the British Heart Foundation. Then Bloomberg and Salomon Smith Barney are sponsoring their sixth annual Family Day and Fun Run in Battersea Park on 13 June in aid of cystic fibrosis.

Peter Middleton, chairman of SSB, and a chunk of the bank's managing directors will participate. Favourite, however, will be David Heath, who works in the technology division and won the five-kilometre race in 15 minutes 46 seconds last year.

ROY BISHKO, the Tie Rack chairman was in typically ebullient form yesterday, notwithstanding the retailer's dismal results. His latest "coup" is to sign up Trevor Brookling, the former West Ham and England football international, to wear Tie Rack's range of neckwear.

Our Trev has been wearing the ties on Match of the Day now for several weeks now - "We've noticed the difference in sales," the company says. He is also contracted to wear various designs throughout the World Cup, where he will be resident pundit for the BBC.

The Tie Rack deputy chairman Martin Morgan, admits that a World Cup promotion will not have maximum penetration as not everyone is interested in football. This point was underlined by one female journalist at the press conference who asked: "Who's Trevor Brookling?"

EVER wondered how the foreign exchange markets work, and how it is that City currency traders wield so much power over the fortunes of British industry? Help is at hand in the shape of Charles Goodhart, a member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee and LSE professor.

The famously clever professor - much in the news for his alleged views on interest rates yesterday - has made a video explaining all on behalf of the LSE's Financial Markets Group.

The film shows what a dealing room looks like, how traders gather their information, what a Reuters screen looks like, what bid and ask quotes are and so on. It is aimed at the hazy tower so academics can get an idea of exactly what it is they are researching. Not exactly one for home viewing, but budding traders with access to the Internet can get details from <http://icp.lse.ac.uk/jfmg/publications/>

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark	Spot	1 month	3 months
UK	10000	25480	25420	0.0002	0.0001	0.0002	0.0001
Australia	22518	21977	21977	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Canada	21212	21212	21212	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Denmark	61834	61834	61834	3.2175	3.2175	3.2175	3.2175
France	23908	23908	23908	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Germany	12488	12488	12488	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Italy	15759	15759	15759	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Japan	81072	81072	81072	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Netherlands	12488	12488	12488	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Portugal	30070	30070	30070	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Spain	52201	52201	52201	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Sweden	12488	12488	12488	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
Switzerland	24489	24489	24489	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313	1.5313
US	10000	25480	25420	0.0002	0.0001	0.0002	0.0001

Interest Rates

UK	Germany	US	Japan
Base	2.50%	5.50%	5.50%
Discount	4.50%	4.50%	4.50%
Prime	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
3 month	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
6 month	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%
1 year	5.50%	5.50%	5.50%

Bond Yields

Country	3 month	1 year	2 year	5 year	10 year
Australia	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
Belgium	3.70	4.01	4.01	4.01	4.01
Canada	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
France	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
Germany	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
Italy	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
Japan	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
Netherlands	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
Portugal	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
Spain	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
Sweden	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
Switzerland	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01
US	4.81	4.04	4.01	4.01	4.01

Money Market Rates

Overnight	1 week	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
UK	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
Germany	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
US	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
Japan	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25

Liffe Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement	High	Low	Est floor	Open
Long GR	Jun-98	10533	10533	10533	10533
Short GR	Jun-98	10533	10533	10533	10533
Long BR	Jun-98	10533	10533	10533	10533
Short BR	Jun-98	10533	10533	10533	10533

Industrial Metals

Commodity	Price	Change
Aluminium	1453.5	+14.5
Copper	1453.5	+14.5
Gold	1453.5	+14.5
Iron Ore	1453.5	+14.5

Precious Metals

Commodity	Price	Change
Platinum	1453.5	+14.5
Palladium	1453.5	+14.5
Silver	1453.5	+14.5
Gold	1453.5	+14.5

Other Spot Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months
Argentina	10000	25480	25420
Brazil	10000	25480	25420
China	10000	25480	25420
India	10000	25480	25420

Other Futures Rates

Commodity	Price	Change
Oil	1453.5	+14.5
Natural Gas	1453.5	+14.5
Coal	1453.5	+14.5

Latest Unit Trust Prices

Fund	Price	Change
ABF Growth Trust	1453.5	+14.5
ABF Income Trust	1453.5	+14.5
ABF Property Trust	1453.5	+14.5

Commodity Indices

Index	Price	Change
Oil	1453.5	+14.5
Natural Gas	1453.5	+14.5
Coal	1453.5	+14.5

Other Futures Rates

Commodity	Price	Change
Oil	1453.5	+14.5
Natural Gas	1453.5	+14.5
Coal	1453.5	+14.5

Other Futures Rates

Commodity	Price	Change
Oil	1453.5	+14.5
Natural Gas	1453.5	+14.5
Coal	1453.5	+14.5

Other Futures Rates

Commodity	Price	Change
Oil	1453.5	+14.5
Natural Gas	1453.5	+14.5
Coal	1453.5	+14.5

IF YOU KEEP INFORMED ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING.

Bloomberg

TELEVISION

Latest Unit Trust Prices				Latest Unit Trust Prices				Latest Unit Trust Prices			
Fund	Sat	Sun	Ytd	Fund	Sat	Sun	Ytd	Fund	Sat	Sun	Ytd
ABF Growth Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Japan Space Tech	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Income Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Worldwide	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Property Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Social Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	High Income Inc	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Tech Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF World Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF US Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Europe Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Asia Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Africa Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Oceania Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Energy Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Healthcare Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Financial Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Commodities Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Art & Collectibles Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Entertainment Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Media Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Telecommunications Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Utilities Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Transportation Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Aerospace & Defense Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Chemicals Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Pharmaceuticals Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Biotechnology Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Environmental Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Socially Responsible Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Index Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Sector Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Country Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Global Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Emerging Markets Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
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ABF Stock Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Option Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Derivative Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
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ABF Energy & Environment Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
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ABF Real Estate Marketing Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
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ABF Real Estate Legal Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
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ABF Real Estate Insurance Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Tax Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Regulatory Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
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ABF Real Estate Governance Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Sustainability Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Social Responsibility Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Diversity Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Inclusion Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Equality Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Justice Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Freedom Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Security Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Privacy Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Property Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Assets Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100
ABF Real Estate Liabilities Trust Ltd	256.59	258.13	258.41	Investment Protection	42.35	44.78	100	Europe Growth	64.330	67.952	100

Coulthard out to put the squeeze on his race rivals

Motor racing

By Derick Allsop
in Imola

THIS, the Formula One fraternity concurs, is where the season proper gets under way. So it is appropriate David Coulthard should have redefined his strategy for the championship here yesterday.

The Scotsman, unceremoniously muscled out of contention for victory by Michael Schumacher in Argentina a fortnight ago, is patently prepared to be a more robust opponent in Sunday's San Marino Grand Prix.

Coulthard still awaits his first win of the campaign after three long-haul races and realises he must make his presence felt back on European ground if he is not to be left trailing his McLaren-Mercedes team-mate, Mika Hakkinen, and the rejuvenated Schumacher-Ferrari combination.

"Next time I'll do something different," said Coulthard, thinly veiling his intent behind a gentle smile.

He was at pains to stress he would never resort to foul or dangerous tactics, but he was adamant he had the necessary racing instinct to succeed at this level.

Coulthard, who finished

sixth in Buenos Aires following a subsequent collision with Jacques Villeneuve, said: "I don't think my ability as a racer can be questioned. Sometimes in situations you come off better, sometimes worse. You don't have your opinion of a driver on one race."

"I'm comfortable with the way I race within the rules. I would never deliberately run anyone off the road or put them into the wall. But that doesn't mean I won't squeeze them as far as I think is safe. That's fundamental to racing."

"Staying out in front is one change I would like, but I'm always looking at different ways of racing. I'm always looking to push harder and find the limit. Those two incidents in Argentina are in the past and I'm focused on trying to win this grand prix and mount my challenge for the championship."

"I would obviously be happier if I had been winning races, but I'm in third place in the championship with 13 races to go."

Coulthard and Schumacher shook hands yesterday and exchanged pleasantries before re-treating to plot today's first practice session.

Schumacher, who moved ahead of Coulthard in the

standings with his maximum score in Argentina, professed himself optimistic with this weekend and confirmed Ferrari's plan to use the new, if unsightly, wings that are in vogue but likely to be outlawed soon by the sport's governing body, the FIA.

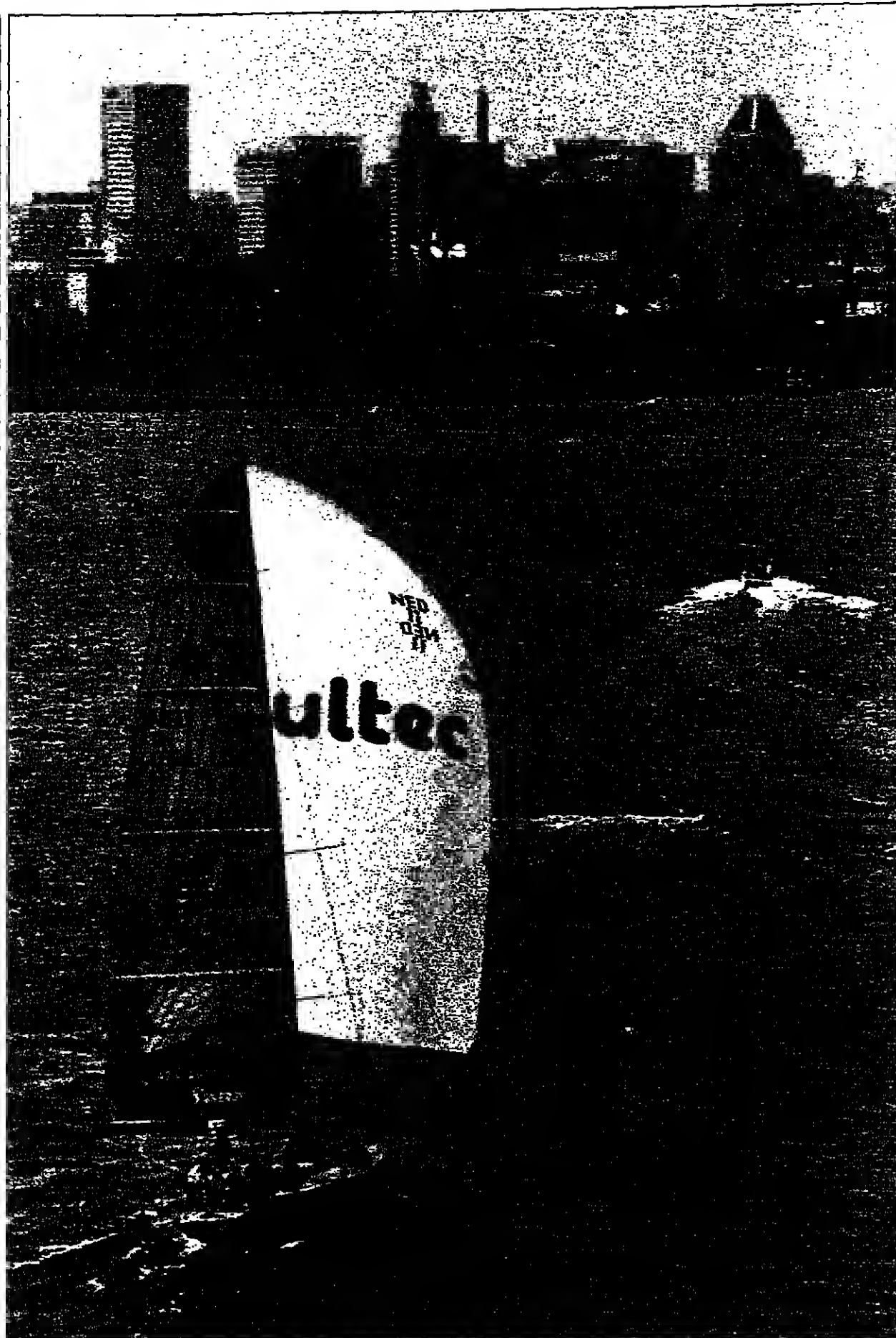
The German, apparently unaware of the objection raised by the FIA president, Max Mosley, to the latest aerodynamic device, said: "What is the point to go on changing rules?"

"There is no reason why we should not be as competitive here as we were in Argentina. We have reason to be confident because we have improved the car."

Williams are in dire need of improvements, but Villeneuve, their defending champion, must wait until the next two races for significant changes to his car.

The Canadian has been criticised in some quarters for his contribution to the cause. He responded: "I don't think it's fair, but it happens all the time. You're only as good as your last race, and people forget the other 20 or 30 races and all the pressure of fighting."

The world rally champion, Tommy Makinen, walked away unhurt from a 175mph mishap while testing the Williams Formula One car in Barcelona, Spain, yesterday.



Victory in view: Whitbread winner Brunel Sunery approaches Baltimore on Wednesday

Photograph: Allsop

Conner to face Guillou protest

Sailing

By Stuart Alexander
in Baltimore

THE all-woman team of EF Education are to go ahead with a protest against Dennis Conner's Toshiba for a right of way incident on the first night of the seventh leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race from Fort Lauderdale.

The only joy for Conner as he flew home to San Diego after Brunel Sunery had led the fleet into Baltimore on Wednesday was that he had pipped local man George Collins by just 10 seconds to be seventh rather than eighth. That equalled Toshiba's worst result on the previous six legs and Conner's discomfort was heightened by the knowledge that the man he called in to force co-skipper Paul Standbridge to stand aside, Chesapeake Bay pilot Mike Powers, had embarrassingly run Toshiba aground.

Christine Guillou, EF Education's skipper, will tell an international jury that Conner was in the wrong. Conner will claim that Toshiba exonerated themselves by taking a 720-degree, double-turn penalty. The American will be anxious not to see his boat docked points for a second time after being penalised for not reporting the use of the engine to clear weed from the prop on leg five.

Conner's margin was the tightest in Whitbread history on a day when Gumar Krantz's Swedish Match narrowed the gap on overall leader EF Language to 104 points, with two legs to go.

Any hope that Britain's Silk Cut could pull themselves up to a podium place by the time the race finishes in Southampton have faded. Lawrie Smith was beaten by three and a half minutes for fourth place by Kaut Frostad's Innovation Kvaerner. "It was really nice to beat my old skipper," Frostad said.

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Four-match ban for racist abuse

Rugby League

By Dave Hadfield

THE first player to be sent off for racially abusing an opponent has been given a relatively lenient four-match ban for an offence which has alarmed a game zealous of its multi-racial credentials.

Anthony Gibbons, the 22-year-old Bramley utility player, was sent off by referee Nick Oddy during the Easter Monday Second Division match against Doncaster for verbally assaulting their winger, Alex Goulbourne.

In an agreed statement, the Rugby League's disciplinary committee said that it was "satisfied that the player was not a racist. Whilst he admitted using abusive language to an opponent, it was in the heat of the moment and he is offering a full apology."

Nobody from Doncaster gave evidence against Gibbons, but the committee considered a number of testimonies from schools in and around Leeds, many of them multi-ethnic, where he has coached pupils. The Bramley

club has underlined that it takes seriously its responsibilities under the sport's 13-point action plan against racism, which will be unveiled with a rare sense of timing, next Tuesday.

Eugene Currie, the Bramley prop sent off for a dangerous tackle during the same, stormy match, has been suspended for two matches.

Warrington's New Zealand Test forward, Brendon Tuuta, will miss his side's fixture against St Helens at Anfield on Sunday after being banned for one match for a tackle in the match against the London Broncos last Sunday.

Andy Farrell reverts to the stand-off position he filled for Great Britain in the Test series against Australia for Wigan's match against the London Broncos on Sunday.

Farrell moves to the backs to cover for Henry Paul, who will not return from playing for New Zealand against Australia until Monday. Denis Betts slots into Farrell's usual loose forward role, with Lee Gilmour and Simon Houghton in the second row.

The relaxed Wigan coach, John Monie, has also taken the unusual step of telling his players their Wembley line-up for 2 May, although he has warned that he could have a change of heart if there are any outstanding performances against London.

Their Challenge Cup final opponents, Sheffield Eagles, are pursuing a different strategy. The Eagles coach, John Kear, played a number of first-team players in unfamiliar positions in the Alliance match against Huddersfield last night and may well do the same in the Super League match at the same venue on Sunday, whilst keeping his Wembley selection under wraps.

Leeds will cover for the absence of Richie Blackmore, also in New Zealand for the Test, by bringing in Marcus St Hilaire and moving Francis Cummins to centre against Salford tonight.

Salford, who expect to have Scott Naylor and Martin Crompton fit again, are favourites to sign the former Halifax forward, Paul Highton, now at the club he has been made a free agent.

Sampras humiliated by Santoro

Tennis

By John Roberts
in Monte Carlo

PETE SAMPRAS "dug a big hole" for himself in the clay at the Monte Carlo Open yesterday while Petr Korda figuratively melted beside him, building a castle. Or was it Fawley Towers? Sampras's 6-1, 6-1 defeat by the Frenchman Fabrice Santoro, his heaviest for eight years, leaves Korda just two matches away from becoming the world No 1.

Korda's challenge to become only the 15th player to reach the top since the ATP rankings began in 1973 was almost incidental compared to Sampras's humiliation. So abysmal was the American world champion's performance that it seemed ludicrous that he would have regained the No 1 position vacated by the injured Marcelo Rios automatically as he did yesterday.

The 30-year-old Czech came close to blowing his chances, squandering a 5-0 first-set lead before recovering to defeat Spain's Albert Costa, 5-7, 6-4, 6-4. Korda needs to advance to Sunday's final to secure enough points to add his name to the elite few.

In the quarter-finals today he will play the Dutchman Richard Krajicek, the 1996 Wimbledon champion. Sampras, who has failed to win two matches in succession in his last three tournaments, has not been so embarrassed by a scoreline since losing to Sweden's Jonas Svensson, 6-0, 6-1, on clay in Munich in 1990. Allowing for

the fact that Sampras generally finds the slow red clay difficult to master, it is rare to see great players flounder as he did yesterday.

Santoro, ranked No 25, was in two minds whether or not to enter the tournament, complaining last week that he had not fully recovered from a virus infection and a boil on his stomach. His doctor gave him him an injection two days before the event, a cure that was psychological more than physical.

Both players were off the boil yesterday. Sampras's elementary errors, particularly on the forehand, making it appear that this player on a mission to complete his set of Grand Slam singles titles by winning the French Open had never before set foot on a clay court.

Santoro's spiky, blond-tinted

hair was like a beacon as he moved confidently about the court, capitalising on his opponent's errors and luring him into more, encouraging by the fact that Sampras's first serve percentage was down to 36 per cent over the 65 minutes.

"I'm stunned," Sampras said. "Every aspect of my game was just not there. My serve was off, my forehand was off. You just can't afford not to play well against someone like Santoro, who really doesn't miss much. I kind of felt myself digging a big hole as the match went on."

Santoro, who has won three of his five matches against Sampras, said he had learned from his straight-sets defeat in the first round of last year's French Open. "In the French Open I was standing two metres behind the

baseline. Today I was staying on the baseline, so that the ball would come back earlier to him and it wouldn't give him time."

"I saw that he had hit his forehand. At the end of the first set, I saw that he felt he continued that way he would have no chance against me. He tried to change things and he was more aggressive, and he started making many mistakes."

Boris Becker continued to make good use of his wild card, demoralising the young Australian Mark Philippoussis in only 48 minutes, 6-1, 6-1. And Gustavo Kuerten, the French Open champion, was worn down by Cedric Pioline, 7-6, 6-1.

QUARTER-FINAL LISTS: Santoro v P. Korda, 6-1, 6-1; Santoro v P. Korda, 6-1, 6-1; Santoro v P. Korda, 6-1, 6-1.

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Impressive Pinto plays down status as odds-on favourite

London Marathon

By Mike Rowbottom

PORTUGUESE sporting stock in the capital, lowered by Wednesday night's 3-0 defeat at Wembley, stands a good chance of picking up this Sunday, thanks to one man: Antonio Pinto.

Very sensibly Pinto deflects suggestions that he is the favourite to win the Flora London Marathon by pointing out the numerous other top class performers competing.

"Abel Anton, Josiah Thugwane, Steve Monaghan, Jon Brown, Paul Evans," he said. "There are a group of favourites, and I respect them all."

For all that, Pinto's record in the 12 months since he won this event in a course record of 2hr 07min 55sec sets him ahead of his rivals in the same way that Catherine McKiernan stands clear of the women's field. The bookies have him at 10-4 on.

Two recent performances in Lisbon have consolidated the position of a runner who has proved a worthy successor to his illustrious compatriot, Carlos Lopes.

In March, he set a world half marathon best of 59min 43sec. And on 4 April he lowered his 10,000 metres personal best to 27min 15.76sec - staggering form for an athlete in training for 26 miles 385 yards.

That performance gained further resonance yesterday when he confirmed that he had run in flat shoes, rather than spikes. "I had a big commitment to running in London, and I didn't want to risk injury," he said.

He will line up as much in expectation as hope on Sunday as he seeks to equal Dionicio Ceron's record of three London victories - Pinto won in 1992 in only his second marathon.

Pinto's most recent experience of the London race have been contrasting in nature. In 1995 he looked as if he was going to run away with it before being caught and passed near the end by Ceron and Monaghan.

Last year, he lowered Steve Jones's 12-year-old course record after passing four runners in the final three miles.

So the tactics for this year? "How fast I will run depends on the weather, but I will definitely

be keeping up with the front runners."

Pinto's preparations could hardly have gone better. But his bright face clouded over when he was asked about comments he was reported to have made questioning the recent advances of the Spanish distance runners, with the clear implication that they may be using unfair means.

Speaking through his translator - and manager - Luis Felipe Posso - he said yesterday that his comments had referred to the criticism voiced by another Spanish runner, Pablo Sierra, who was suspended by the Spanish federation for six months after accusing Antonio and a colleague, Martin Fiz, of using EPO, a drug which stimulates the growth of red blood cells.

"Antonio does not share these suspicions," Posso said. "He has run with Antonio and Fiz for many years, and he regards them as friends."

A day earlier, Antonio, through his manager Miguel Mostaza, strongly defended himself, pointing out he had progressed throughout a long career, and had never tested positive.

Taunton

HYPERION
5.40 B My Lovely 6.10 Laser Light Lady 6.40
Wayward King 7.10 Accountancy Lady 7.40 Mr
Playful 8.10 Blue Blazer (nb)

GOING: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course)
● Race-handicapper: Run-in of 150yds.
● Course: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
Members: 27. Fiddlers: 27. Centre of Course: 23. CAR PARK: 23.
GOING: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
● Race-handicapper: Run-in of 150yds.
● Course: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
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● Course: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
Members: 27. Fiddlers: 27. Centre of Course: 23. CAR PARK: 23.

6.40

PETER & SYBIL BLACKBURN NOVICE
CHASE (CLASS D) £5,250 2m 3f
1. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
2. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
3. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
4. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
5. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
6. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
7. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
8. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
9. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
10. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue

GOING: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
● Race-handicapper: Run-in of 150yds.
● Course: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
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GOING: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
● Race-handicapper: Run-in of 150yds.
● Course: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
Members: 27. Fiddlers: 27. Centre of Course: 23. CAR PARK: 23.

7.10

NUFFIELD HOSPITAL NOVICE
HURDLE (CLASS E) £2,500 2m 11yds
1. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
2. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
3. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
4. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
5. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
6. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
7. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
8. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
9. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
10. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue

GOING: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
● Race-handicapper: Run-in of 150yds.
● Course: 5.40 (Good to Soft in places on hurdles course).
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8.10

RED CROSS & ST JOHN HANDICAP
HURDLE (CLASS F) £2,500 2m 11yds
1. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
2. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
3. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
4. WAYWARD KING (11) R. Houghton 5 7 7. D. Donohue
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Racing results

BEVERLEY

2.10: 1. EASTER OGIL (J. Dutton) 5-2; 2. Wayward King 5-1; 3. D. Donohue 5-1; 4. Wayward King 5-1; 5. Wayward King 5-1; 6. Wayward King 5-1; 7. Wayward King 5-1; 8. Wayward King 5-1; 9. Wayward King 5-1; 10. Wayward King 5-1.

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Guillou
protest

27/RACING

THE INDEPENDENT
FRIDAY 24 APRIL 1998
27

Exonerated Aspell seeks redress

By Richard Edmondson

LIVELY KNIGHT will run in the Whitbread Gold Cup at Sandown tomorrow without a considerable amount of over-weight on his back. His regular rider, Leighton Aspell, one of three jockeys arrested in January, yesterday had an immense burden of suspicion removed from his shoulders when police said he was no longer part of their race-fixing enquiries.

Aspell, who was apprehended alongside his colleagues Jamie Osborne and Dean Gallagher, had been due to attend Charing Cross police station for further questioning. A letter from the Metropolitan Police Organised Crime Group means he will now have next Wednesday free for professional duties.

Lively Knight hardly lived up to his name in a novices' chase at Plumpton just over a year ago, limping home the second of

three runners despite being sent off at 1-7. He was subsequently found to have been doped and police investigating both the drugging of horses and race-fixing asked Aspell to see them.

"I knew that I would be proved innocent in the long run, but the whole investigation has been very worrying for me and my family," the jockey said yesterday. "I hope this is an end to the whole matter as far as I am concerned and that Jamie and Dean will be released soon."

"It's a weight off my mind. You do feel that people have been watching you more than before, but there was never any doubt in my mind that this day would come. I am annoyed that it has taken this long but I am glad it has happened."

In the slipstream of Aspell's exoneration came the suggestion of compensation. The jockey rode on under a cloud of doubt following the suspension

of his licence for a week by the Jockey Club. "While I do not like to dwell on it, this episode may have caused untold damage to Leighton's reputation," Richard Brooks, the rider's solicitor, said yesterday. "He was arrested amid a blaze of publicity which was fuelled by some very unfortunate comments."

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Johnny Staccato (Sandown 5.15)
NB: Jack Robbo (Perth 3.50)

from figures in authority. None of this was his making.

"In addition to this, Leighton has lost a not insignificant amount of earnings because the Jockey Club saw fit to suspend him and, of course, he has to pay his legal fees. This has been a joint investigation by the Jockey Club and the police and I therefore presume that the

Club knew that there was no evidence of wrongdoing by Leighton. This makes the suspension of his licence all the more disturbing."

Josh Gifford, Lively Knight's trainer, added: "I am thrilled to bits. This has been badly handled by the Jockey Club. I hope Leighton is given a big apology and I hope he gets compensation because you can't imagine what the poor boy's been through."

"The fact that he has been exonerated is wonderful, but it should not have happened in the first place. This has been a very trying time for Leighton and it is to his credit that he has come through it as well as he has."

The focus will now shift to Osborne and Gallagher. The former was the partner of Avanti Express, who was pulled up when well fancied at Exeter, also last March. The gelding was lat-

er found to have been administered the same tranquilliser as Lively Knight.

Gallagher was scooped up in a dawn raid on his Lambourn home and was interviewed, along with four other men, including professional gamblers, none of whom were licensed by the Jockey Club.

Gallagher was in winning form at Perth on Wednesday, when he steered home the rather unfortunately named King Of Thieves. Osborne, though, has not been in the saddle for the latter part of the season after badly injuring his wrist in a racecourse fall. Their fate remains unclear.

"I have spoken to Andrew Chalk, who is representing Jamie, and also to Dean's solicitors," Brooks said. "They are obviously happy for Leighton but are in the dark as to why the other two jockeys could not be released."



Aspell: worrying wait is over

Angry Guest throws it in

RICHARD GUEST threw his jockeys' licence through the door of the Perth stewards' room yesterday, vowing never to ride again.

Guest reacted furiously to being told he was in breach of the non-triers' rule over his riding of This Is My Life, an 8-1 chance who finished 10th, beaten 64 lengths in the selling hurdle. The horse's trainer, Kate Milligan, was fined £1,000 and the horse is now suspended for 30 days.

Guest said he was the victim of a witchhunt. "I've retired. I'm finished. This is not a heat-of-the-moment thing - I'm not going to wake up in the morning and change my mind."

SANDOWN
2.05: Hittman was strongly fancied to win for Henry Cecil at Leicester (1m) a fortnight ago but could not get past PM PROPOSIN.

2.35: Star Manager is a spring horse - this eight-year-old won his initial outings in 1995 and 1996, both in April. Bryan McMahon's stable has made a sharp start to the season so the fact that Out Of Sight has not run for 11 months should not

HYPERION'S TV TIPS

count against him. Rod Millman has also been saddling winners, though, and THERESEA should be staying on best of all in the closing stages.

3.10: ALMUSHTARAK looks to be

in great shape judging on his narrow second to Applejod on soft going at Newmarket last week.

3.40: Ivor's Flinter often has his own ideas about racing but a 6lb rise in the weights for a Kempton victory two weeks ago would not stop him if he's in the right mood. INVERMARK, however, looks the one to be on. He steps up to a stayer's distance for the first time and ought to prove entirely suited by it.

Sandown 2.35									
Age	Sex	Wt	Wt	Wt	Wt	Wt	Wt	Wt	Wt
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Sandown 3.10									
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Carlisle

HYPERION
2.25 Zircon 2.55 High Premium 3.30 Thanks Keith 4.00 Thank 4.30 Hollow Head 5.05 Mukarrab

GOING: Good (Good to Soft in places). STALLS: Inside. DRAW ADVANTAGE: High numbers best in 1m races.

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Perth

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Ludlow

HYPERION
5.30 Sapphire 6.00 Mister Drum 6.30 Madam Muck 7.00 Hardy Weather 7.30 Jimmy Gals 8.00 George Bull

GOING: Good (Good to Soft in places).

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Warwick

HYPERION
5.20 Jack The TD 5.50 Cool As A Cucumber 6.20 Wesley's Lad 6.50 Another Dandy 7.20 Woodrising 7.50 Where's Miranda

GOING: Soft (Heavy in places).

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8 Fodran									
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6 S Bernard									
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Wenger counsels caution on wages

Football

By Andrew Warshaw
in Paris

ARSENE WENGER yesterday warned his millionaire players not to expect an automatic rise if they win the Premiership title. Wenger has been around long enough not to allow a little success to a man's head, or indeed a club's. "I have always encouraged all the clubs where I worked not to spend money they don't have," Wenger said.

"Obviously we need to keep the players happy, the question is how to do it. I will advise the board not to be stupid."

Whether this means Arsenal will be selling in order to buy remains to be seen but Wenger clearly plans to do things his way, just as he has done for the last 18 months.

With his vice-chairman, David Dein, in the audience at Soccer-Ex, the international football forum where Wenger was speaking, the Arsenal manager admitted he had a dilemma:

how to preserve the club's wage structure while understanding at the same time that there are some players who are worth their weight in gold.

"You need to have a wage structure so you can look people in the eye," he said. "Having said that, everyone says footballers are overpaid but if you took the 50 best paid sportsmen in the world, not one of them would be a footballer. I can't see wage demands getting any lower for the foreseeable future."

Wenger is increasingly con-

cerned about the effects of the Bosman ruling, which applies to domestic players in Britain from next season, as well as imports, at the end of their contracts.

He said players have dramatically gained the upper hand over their employers as a result of Bosman. "The only way not to lose your top players is to tie them to long-term contracts," Wenger said. "But even that doesn't necessarily work. Ronaldo has signed for Inter Milan for 10 years but no one expects him to stay there that long."

Wenger, who was discussing how to deal with millionaire players, said he was concerned that the relationship between club and player was being eroded.

"Ten years ago players and clubs struck together to win things. I used to think that it was a collective thing. Nowadays it seems they are not always going in the same direction," he said. "The situation where a player is only at a club until a better offer comes along is not good for football."

On the same topic, Black-

burn's manager, Roy Hodgson, highlighted the democratic wage structure he employed when coaching Malmö a few years ago. At the Swedish club then, there were three tiers according to experience. Hodgson conceded that such a system would today be outdated.

"Unfortunately football clubs now have to accept that if they pay top wages to keep a player they automatically also have to reward players lower down the scale or replace them."

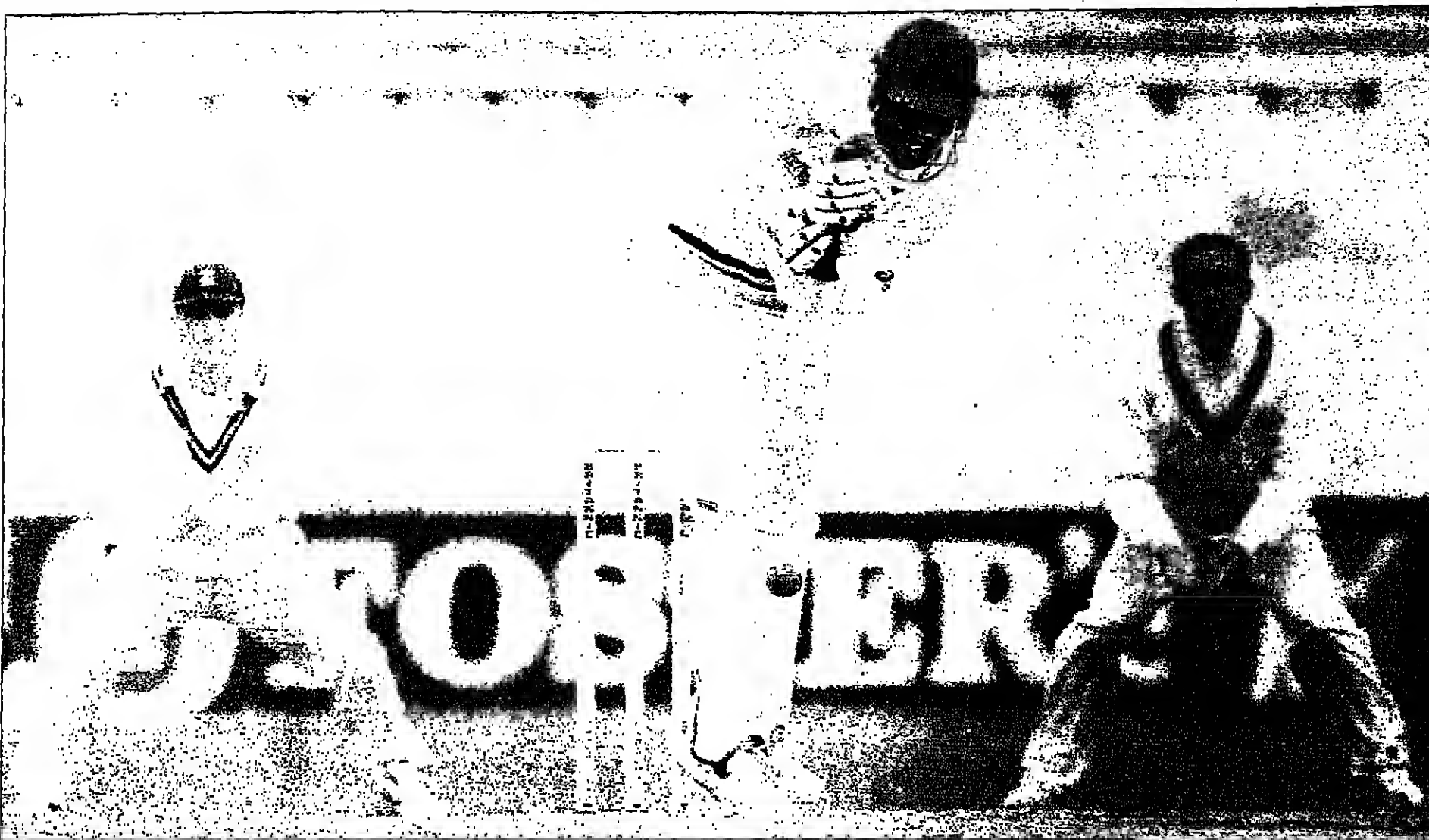
Hodgson also took the op-

portunity to repeat his support for his forgotten England striker Chris Sutton, who has virtually no chance of being selected by Glenn Hoddle for England's World Cup squad.

"Chris Sutton was playing very well when he was selected against Cameroon when he came on for the last 15 minutes. When the next squad came out he was relegated to what was virtually an under-21 team against Chile," Hodgson said. "Chris just got the impression he was not appreciated. He

wanted to play on merit. As far as I am concerned players must follow their conscience."

Hodgson suggested subtly that the acclaim that greeted Manchester United's hat-trick for the England B team against Russia on Tuesday could have been overdone. "Le Tissier had a great game against a very weak Russian team. Is he more qualified than someone who does well every week against Arsenal or Manchester United?" he said. "Hodgson's savours perfect warm-up, page 28



Waiting game: The Warwickshire captain, Brian Lara, on his way to 38, which included six fours, at The Oval yesterday.

Report, scorecard, page 29; Photograph: Peter Jay

Australia target for Atherton

Cricket

By Michael Prestage

MICHAEL ATHERTON failed a late fitness test before yesterday's Championship game between Lancashire and Middlesex, but the rain which wiped out the first day's play may yet give the former England captain the chance of some much needed batting practice and the opportunity to prove his worth to the international selectors.

He will need to be at his fittest, for yesterday the Australian Board unveiled a grueling winter schedule for England's tour of Australia - as well as five Tests, the tourists could play 13 one-day internationals in a triangular tournament with the host country and current world champions, Sri Lanka. Breaking with tradition, the Tests will be played in a block before the start of the limited-overs event.

The programme will give the England team maximum opportunity to hone their one-day skills in the run-up to the World Cup in England in 1999.

As in the West Indies this winter, England will choose two squads of players, one for the Test matches and one for the Carlton and United One Day

Series. The one-day squad will comprise up to 18 players due to the unprecedented number of matches.

England will play five one-day internationals each against Australia and Sri Lanka, with the winners progressing to a best-of-three final in February. The Test squad will fly out to Australia in late October and preparation for the first Test in Brisbane will include three four-day games.

After Atherton's misery in the Caribbean this winter which culminated in his resigning the captaincy, he now faces the agony of a recurring back injury flaring up again. He found it too painful to contemplate playing yesterday and struggled in a short nets session. "I've got a back injury and you can't do much about injuries," was the extent of his comment.

England's chairman of selectors, David Graveney, who postponed a visit to Old Trafford yesterday in the light of the inclement weather did, however, offer some comfort to Atherton. Graveney insisted it was not just his form in the Championship that would be considered. "As long as he is looking in form in whatever competition he is in, that's fine."

Tour itinerary, Digest, Scoreboard, page 29

Stevens confirms his potential

Snooker

MATTHEW STEVENS, considered a future world champion, marked his Embassy World Championship debut at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, yesterday with victory over the ninth-seed Alain Robidoux, a result that was widely anticipated by those in the know.

The 20-year-old qualifier won 10-8 to leave Robidoux a loser in the first round in all eight of this season's ranking events.

Stevens, who has had to contend with his own personal problems recently, was the first to offer a word of

sympathy for last season's semi-finalist. "I know Alain has had his cue problems this season," explained Stevens, who now meets Essex's Mark King for a place in the quarter-finals.

"I know if the same thing happened to me it would take months and months to get used to a replacement. It's even tougher when you have to play match after match."

"It's a pity really because Alain had done so well last season. Despite his problems it was still a hard match, because after all this was my first time at the venue. I didn't treat him lightly because he's still a great player and I'm just glad to get through."

Stevens, a semi-finalist in this season's Grand Prix and UK Championship, was doubly pleased to make his first appearance at the Crucible a winning one. His father, Morrell, a constant travelling companion over the years, suffered an angina attack last week. Happily, Stevens senior was able to travel to Sheffield after hospital treatment.

"It was a shock at the time and I'm really pleased he's OK," said Stevens.

"It was at the back of my mind, but I managed to concentrate on my match," added Stevens, who began the day 5-4 up after a gruelling first session on Thursday.

Robidoux had been 4-0 down but stayed in contention by sharing the first eight frames of the final session. In the end, though, his attempt to break his season's duck ended in failure again as Stevens won frame 18 by 82-0.

Robidoux's problems began last year when he returned to Canada for the close season. He took his cue for minor repairs to the same cue doctor he'd used for years but his repairer took offence at an advertising sticker attached to Robidoux's cue and immediately smashed it beyond repair.

"I must have used at least 15 cues since then, but none

feel quite right," Robidoux said.

John Higgins, the world No 2, resumes this morning 6-2 down to the 14th seed, Anthony Hamilton. Higgins, one of the favourites for the title, laboured in his opening game with Jason Ferguson and it was clear that had not shaken off his malaise against Hamilton.

Hamilton made a top break of 115 and also added runs of 82, 88, 36 and 75 as he won five frames without reply after Higgins went 2-1 up. Theirs is the first second-round match to start and concludes this evening.

After Ronnie O'Sullivan's 10-5 first-round victory over Joe Swail he said that his cousin Maria Catalano had a better chance of winning her women's world title this week than he did of winning the Embassy World Championship.

That prediction proved false as the 16-year-old from Dudley suffered a 4-0 whitewash in the last 32 yesterday to June Banks, the world No 5, in Sheffield.

Karen Corr, the defending champion, who earlier this week won the world ladies' billiards title, beat Vicki Revell 4-0 to reach the last 16. The final is at the Crucible on Sunday.

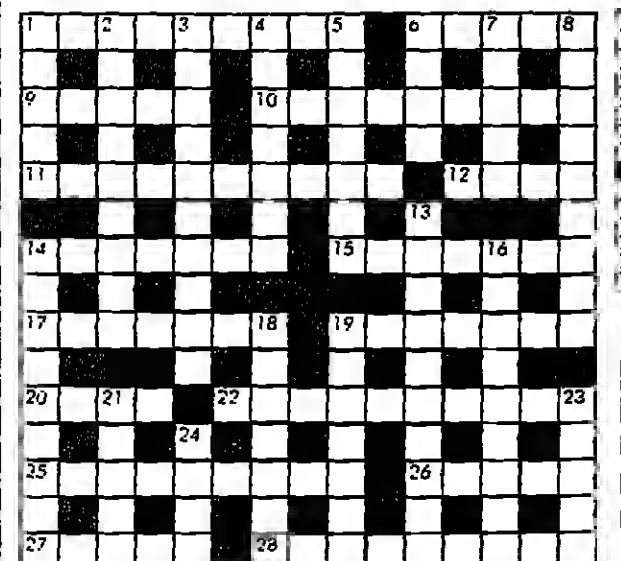
Results, Digest, page 29

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3293, Friday 24 April

By Mass

Thursday's solution

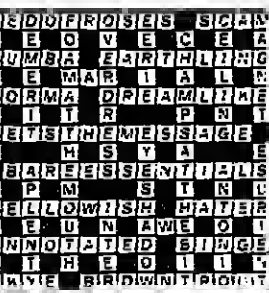


ACROSS

- 1 There's point in boy's zeal, at odds with idler (4-5)
- 6 Wit gets us rolling when things dawn on us (13-2)
- 9 Said measurements must be for pants (15)
- 10 Disease mostly infecting animal preserve (9)
- 11 Boxer in training's not much of a fier (10)
- 12 Island sort of first-rate drink (4)
- 14 Simple sort of home, open but not trendy (7)
- 15 Split, a Party? That's quite a blow (7)
- 17 Runs made by crawlers after 30 (7)
- 19 Sets forth in blasts (7)

DOWN

- 20 Brass representing grand sum (4)
- 22 Praised short opus, getting transported (10)
- 23 Synthetic glass, we hear, for drink (9)
- 26 Headpiece for one in a desert, wound round (5)
- 27 Fabric with name attached to border (5)
- 28 Confuse editors in making revisions (9)
- 1 Irresolution holds up a non-starter (5)
- 2 Tacked or stitched? (9)
- 3 Backwoodsman put out shrub fire (10)
- 4 It's the man who's proposed (7)
- 5 Knight attack, one hears, will prove too much (7)



Portuguese champion drinks four bottles of wine a week

Athletics

By Mike Rowbottom

A VINTAGE performance is in the offing from the defending Flora London Marathon champion this Sunday - regardless of whether he retains his title.

As befits a man who has his own vineyard, Antonio Pinto is partial to a glass or two of wine. Two preferably. Or more, if the occasion demands.

The 32-year-old from Portugal's Vinho Verde region grinned amiably yesterday when asked to confirm reports that he drinks four bottles of wine a week.

"Yes," he replied. "Sometimes more than four."

Such insouciance is rare indeed within the grimly commercial ethos which dominates the world of athletics these days. For the elite marathon runner, there are only two, perhaps three opportunities in a year to earn pots of gold in a big city marathon.

The winner of Sunday's race, for instance will receive \$55,000 (£33,000), and a further \$100,000 for a world best. With that sort of loot at stake for the top contenders, drinking is widely regarded as a no-no.

Pinto appeared yesterday alongside the 1997 women's champion, Joyce Chapchumba, who - by way of counterpoint - provided the standard elite marathon runner's response when questioned over the demon drink. "I have a glass of wine to see in the New Year," she said with a demure smile.

Fine. But that is clearly not Pinto's way. After his recent prodigious performance over 10,000 metres, where he warmed up for London by breaking his personal best, he cheerfully admitted to downing a couple of bottles in one night.

Asked by a Portuguese journalist if he also upheld the national tradition of a little snifter of cognac in the morning, he replied once again in the affirmative.

Wine, he said, was full of vitamins, and his drinking was a natural complement to eating the kind of meals he enjoyed back home. Did that mean he would not be drinking while he was in England? "If I sit in a restaurant and the meal calls for it I will have a drink," he said.

He added that he had brought a few bottles of his own wine over from Portugal - and, by way of confirmation, set one

firmly down alongside his microphone.

Pinto. We may have been pronouncing his name incorrectly all these years.

But anyone thinking it is just as well that he will have a large, blue painted line to follow on Sunday, should be aware of the fact that this is one of the finest marathon runners the world has ever seen.

Pinto could neither confirm nor deny that his illustrious Portuguese predecessor Carlos Lopes had had a glass of wine on the morning he set a new world best back in 1985. But he was able to indicate the general validity of the image. "Carlos used to drink... a lot!" he concluded with another grin.

Lopes, of course, was Olympic champion too. Must be something in it... Steve Cram, the former world record-holder at 1500 metres, one mile and 2,000m, competes in his first London Marathon on Sunday. The 37-year-old athlete-turned-commentator will provide a series of live reports for Eurosport through the gruelling 26 miles.

Pinto plays down status, page 26

"Seeing those two wings reminds me, pass the Hen."

The quintessential speciality ale. A perfect combination of smoothness and strength, with a subtle blend of flavours.

A most Gratifying Ale.

Brewed by Morland of Abingdon. Est'd. 1711.

Pinto plays down status, page 26